

2013 Teacher Workshop on Radiation Science

Once again this year, the UC Berkeley Radiation Science Teacher workshop for high school science teachers was a success. Thirty teachers from schools throughout Northern California participated in the one-day event of lectures and hands-on activities March 15, 2013. The Workshop opened with an overview by the chair of the Nuclear Engineering Department Prof. Karl Van Bibber, as it has in the past with former chairs Prof. Per Peterson and Prof. Jasmina Vujic. Throughout the day, the basic background of radioactivity, health physics and nuclear science was presented, along with topical subjects such as Fukushima and material designs for next-generation reactor concepts. Experiments with cloud chambers and Geiger counters provided practical (and fun) methods to bring the knowledge into the classroom. Teachers took home a wealth of information, new contacts with other teachers, and tools for educating their students on radiation science. The Workshop is hosted by the University of California Berkeley Nuclear Engineering Department, and graciously sponsored by the Northern California Chapter of the Health Physics Society (NCCHPS) and the Northern California Section of the American Nuclear Society. Volunteers included faculty from the Nuclear Engineering department, Prof. Eric Norman and Prof. Peter Hoseman, as well as a number of students. Many volunteers from NCCHPS also participated, notably Brooke Buddemeier (LLNL) and Soheil Damavandi (Stanford Univ.). If you are interested in participating next year, please contact the workshop coordinator Jo Ressler, at ressler2@llnl.gov.



Figure 1. Volunteer Brooke Buddemeier (LLNL) describing sources of radiation encountered in common objects. A teacher from Yreka, CA, holds a Fiestaware plate while Brooke demonstrates a Geiger counter.



Figure 2. Teachers watch and wait for tracks to appear from a cloud chamber experiment.



Figure 3. Teachers listen for the click of radiation from the Geiger counters provided to them. Volunteer Tim Aucott, a graduate student at UC Berkeley, was ready to assist with any issues.