

Procedures for Safe Handling of Radioactive Sources

General Comments

The radioactive sources you will be handling are of such low activity that they require no regulation either federal or state. Nevertheless, you should keep in mind that no source of radiation is completely safe. Please read and follow the procedures listed below for handling radioactive sources in order to minimize any exposure to radiation. Any questions you might have concerning the use of radioactive sources should be addressed to Dr. Van Wormer (radiation safety officer), Rm 108 Gerstacker Hall, ext. 5249.

Procedures

1. Keep in mind that the best shielding from a radioactive source is distance. Since the intensity of radiation falls off as the square of the distance from the source, increasing your distance from the source will greatly reduce your exposure. For a source you will be using, a distance of about one arms length reduces the radiation level to below background. Nevertheless, when the source is not in use, it should be placed a distance of at least two (2) meters from where any person will be.
2. If a lead brick enclosed location has been set up in the laboratory room where you are working, use that location to store your source when it is not in use.
2. When moving a source from one location to another, do not keep the source in your hand any longer than necessary and always hold the source away from your body.
3. When it is necessary to use the source at your lab station, position the detector and source away from where you are sitting or standing by approximately one arms length.
4. Should you be unable to locate the source you had been using, or should the source appear damaged in any way, report this situation to the laboratory instructor immediately.
5. **No food or drink is allowed in the lab room.**
6. Be sure to follow any additional instructions given by your laboratory instructor.