



Oregon

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INFORMATION BULLETIN 2009-03



To: Licensees who perform sentinel lymph node (SLN) biopsy procedures

From: Terry D. Lindsey, Manager 
Radiation Protection Services Section

Subject: Nuclear Regulatory Commission's Regulatory Issue 2008-31

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) released Regulatory Bulletin 2008-31 to inform licensees who perform SLN biopsy procedures that if excised tissues do not contain more than 100 microcuries (3.7 megabecquerels) of post administration of technetium-99m (Tc-99m), the surgical removal of lymph nodes does not require an NRC by product material license.

The NRC's current policy is being revised to allow the surgical removal of lymph nodes without a NRC or Agreement State license. This variance is for excised tissue that does not contain more than 100 microcuries (3.7 megabecquerels) of Tc-99m.

The NRC's regulations applicable to the use of byproduct material for SLN biopsy procedures may be found in 10 CFR Part 30, "Rules of General Applicability to Domestic Licensing of Byproduct Material" and 10 CFR Part 35.

For further information and technical assistance, licensees may contact Cindy Flannery, FSME @ (301) 415-0223 or email cindy.flannery@nrc.gov or Oregon Radioactive Material Licensing program at (971) 673-0490.

NOTE: Since SLN procedures generate medical waste that is capable of setting off very sensitive radiation alarms at medical waste treatment or disposal facilities, it is critical that you remind pathology laboratories processing SLN samples to properly decay in storage for at least 72 hours prior to release of this material to waste processors. Otherwise, this material may cause rejection of a medical waste shipment and return charges to your facility (often amounting to several hundreds or even more than one thousand dollars per returned shipment). See OAR 333-116-0290 for DIS requirements.

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