

Radiological Health

Radiological Health is organized into two divisions that regulate both ionizing and non-ionizing radiation in electronic equipment and radioactive materials. Radiological Health programs operate under the authority granted by four State Regulations: R. 61-63: Radioactive Materials (Title A), R. 61-64: X-Rays (Title B), R. 61-65: Particle Accelerators (Title C), and R. 61-106: Tanning Facilities.

Types of Radiation Regulated

Radiation can be produced by a machine, often referred to as an “electronic product”. Examples of electronic products include x-ray machines, CT machines, and tanning beds.

Radiation is also produced when radioactive elements, referred to as “radioactive materials” undergo radioactive decay and release energy. Examples of radioactive materials include Carbon-14, Uranium-238, and Cesium-137.

Ionizing radiation has many beneficial uses in the fields of medicine, industry, academia, and research and as such we regulate many different facility types.



Radiological Health

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Radiological Health



Division of Electronic Products

The Division is responsible for regulating sources of electronically produced ionizing radiation and non-ionizing radiation (from tanning equipment) related to safety. Functions include registration, inspections, investigations, compliance, and enforcement.

Prior to possessing and operating x-ray equipment, facilities must receive facility registration approval. Some facilities require shielding plans which are reviewed by technically trained staff. Facilities are inspected annually to every five years, depending on equipment type. The Division also regulates companies providing x-ray services (vendors), ensuring equipment is installed and maintained per regulatory standards. This program operates under State Regulation 61-64 X-Rays (Title B).

Approximately 4,400 x-ray facilities are registered as well as about 400 vendors. Some of the x-ray facility types regulated include:

- Dental
- Veterinary
- Chiropractic
- Mammography
- Medical
- Hospitals
- Analytical/
- Industrial
- Prisons
- Academic

SECTIONS

- Inspection, Tanning and Enforcement
- Mammography, Shielding and Facility Registration Approval
- Vendors and Compliance

South Carolina is one of only four Certifying States for the mammography program. As a States As Certifiers (SAC) program, Division employees inspect and certify all 109 South Carolina mammography providers conducting both state and federal inspections (on behalf of FDA). This program operates under State Regulation 61-64 X-Rays (Title B) as well as the FDA Federal Mammography Quality Standards Act.

The tanning program operates under Regulation 61-106 Tanning Facilities. Currently, there are about 362 tanning facilities registered with the Department. Inspectors perform on-site investigations of reported complaints and injuries.

Division of Radioactive Materials Licensing and Compliance

SECTIONS

- Industrial
- Medical

The Division is responsible for regulating radioactive materials (all produce ionizing radiation) relative to safety and security. Functions include licensing, inspections, incident and allegation response, compliance, and enforcement.

Prior to possessing and using radioactive materials in certain types and quantities, the facility must obtain a license that is specific to their facility. The licensing process begins with a comprehensive application which is reviewed

by technically trained staff. Some facilities are generally licensed and must register and follow the regulations but do not undergo a technical licensing process. Facilities are inspected annually to every five years depending on facility type. This program operates under State Regulation 61-63 Radioactive Materials (Title A).

Approximately 300 facilities are specifically licensed and about 75 are generally licensed. Some of the types of licenses include:

- Moisture/Density Gauges
- Industrial Radiography
- Medical Institution
- Nuclear Pharmacy
- Irradiators
- Decontamination/ Nuclear Laundry
- Academic
- Services Consultants

South Carolina is one of 39 Agreement States granted authority by the US Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) through an agreement in which the NRC relinquishes to the States portions of its regulatory authority to license and regulate certain radioactive materials. (We do not have authority to regulate nuclear power plants or any other fuel cycle facilities.)