



**Department of State Health Services (DSHS) First Quarter 2017  
Program Report to the Texas Radiation Advisory Board (TRAB)**

**February 17, 2017**

**Radiation Safety Licensing Branch**

**Radioactive Material Licensing Group**

License review staff have been selected and approved to attend NRC training classes in February and March.

License review staff have begun process of starting to update the regulatory guides.

**Radiation Inspections Group**

**Radioactive Materials (RAM) Inspections Group**

- The Radioactive Materials Group (Inspections) in cooperation with the Licensing Group, is monitoring the construction of a new unshielded pool irradiator in Fort Worth.

## **Mammography and Remote Inspections Group**

- The EQUIP initiative roll-out is going well and so far has been uneventful. Inspectors are briefing all facilities being inspected in 2017 and all facilities seem to embracing the concept.

EQUIP stands for Enhancing Quality Using the Inspection Program. The initiative started January 1, 2017, due to the decline in clinical patient image quality observed through clinical image reviews conducted by the accrediting bodies. In too many cases, patient images submitted for review fail to meet the accrediting body's quality standards when, in the facility's opinion, they represent the facility's best work. EQUIP requires the establishment of a continuous image quality review process, a policy for dealing with poor patient image quality, and enhanced oversight by the lead interpreting physician. The FDA hopes this will reverse the trend of image quality failures, by focusing attention on clinical image quality, during the 3 year interval between the accrediting body's clinical image quality reviews. Being an FDA approved Certifying Agency, the state mammography inspection program will incorporate the same initiative elements into the state inspections. The first year of the initiative is considered a learning period for facilities, and as such, no violations based on the initiative will be cited for the first year.

## **X-Ray Groups**

- The X-ray Groups are currently performing about 90% of all inspections with no notice. This has led to an increase in staff productivity as less time is spent scheduling inspections.

## **Environmental Monitoring Group**

### **Emergency Planning**

#### **Comanche Peak (CP)**

- Approximately 20 DSHS staff will travel to Comanche Peak on February 14<sup>th</sup> & 15<sup>th</sup>, 2017 and attend Emergency Action Level (EAL) training and participate in a Combined Functional Drill (CFD).
- Comanche Peak has a FEMA evaluated Plume Phase exercise scheduled in 2017. The Dress Rehearsal will be on Wednesday, July 12<sup>th</sup>, 2017 and the FEMA evaluated exercise will be on Wednesday, August 16<sup>th</sup>, 2017.

#### **Waste Isolation Pilot Plant**

- On January 9, 2017, U.S. Energy Secretary Ernest Moniz along with Governor Martinez and members of the New Mexico delegation announced the official reopening and resumption of waste operations at the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant. Waste currently being stored on-site in the bay area is expected to begin the transfer process to the underground storage panels in early January, 2017. A schedule for waste shipments has not been finalized, but it is expected that the facility will slowly and safely ramp up to approximately five shipments a week later this year.
- Recently, a total of three Radiological Emergency Response Training classes were provided to a total of 28 first responders at the Benbrook Fire Department in Southwestern Tarrant County.
- A total of 16 each radiological detection instruments were updated and provided to emergency first responders at Fire Departments in Big Spring, Midland, Benbrook and in Cedar Hill, Texas.

## **Pantex**

- The Department of Energy has approved the "Agreement in Principle" (AIP) contract for the federal contract years, 2017-2021.
- DSHS is currently in discussion with Pantex to create procedures for a new field team they are adding to their response to bridge the gap between an incident resulting in an offsite release and the arrival of state responders to the area.
- The Radiation Branch continues to participate, attend and support emergency exercises and drills as well as supporting environmental monitoring, sampling and radiological instrument maintenance and calibration.

## **Radiation Enforcement**

- From November 2016 – January 2017, the Enforcement Unit issued 44 Orders against individuals and companies that were found to have violated the Texas Regulations for Control of Radiation (25 Texas Administrative Code §§289.201 – 302). These Orders have resulted in the assessment of \$127,221.00 in administrative penalties; two radioactive material licenses were revoked during this period as a result of failure to pay license fees.

## **Radiation Policy, Standards, and Quality Assurance Group**

- No rules will be presented at the TRAB meeting on February 17, 2017.
- The draft radioactive materials rules (known as our "RAM 2016/2017" packet) includes:

§289.251 concerning exemptions, general licenses, and general license acknowledgements

§289.252 concerning licensing of radioactive material

§289.253 concerning radiation safety requirements for well logging  
service operations and tracer studies

§289.256 concerning medical and veterinary use of radioactive material

§289.257 concerning packaging and transportation of radioactive material

- On February 13, 2017, all TRAB members should have received a notice via GovDelivery containing an attachment to the draft rules for a 30-day public comment period. The public comment period will end on March 15, 2017.
- Due to the legislative session, all rules have been detained and will remain so until completion of the DSHS transformation scheduled for September 1, 2017.