13.3 General Rules for the Safe Use of Radioactive Materials

Radioactive material users can ensure that exposures to ionizing radiation are maintained "as low as is reasonably achievable" by observing the following standard safety rules:

1. Do not eat, drink, smoke, or apply cosmetics in areas where radioactive materials are used or stored.

2. Do not store food or use food containers in areas where radioactive materials are used or stored.

3. Wear protective clothing when working with radioactive material. This includes laboratory coat, gloves, safety goggles and appropriate footwear (sandals are prohibited).

4. Clearly designate radionuclide work areas (e.g., with "Caution-Radioactive Material" tape) and, to the extent possible, isolate these areas from the rest of the laboratory.

5. Cover work surfaces with absorbent paper and change the paper frequently. Use a spill tray when working with relatively large volumes of liquids.

6. Wear appropriate personnel monitoring device (e.g., body or ring dosimeter) if required.

7. Carefully plan procedures involving radionuclides and, when possible, practice them in advance using non-radioactive materials.

8. Do not mouth pipette radioactive solutions.

9. Label materials known to be, or suspected of being, contaminated with appropriate "Caution Radioactive Material" tape or tag.

10. Dispose of contaminated items in receptacles specifically designated for radioactive wastes.

11. Monitor hands, clothing, and work area for contamination after each procedure or before leaving the laboratory.

12. Maintain accurate records of the use, storage, and disposal of radioactive materials in the laboratory and of contamination surveys conducted.