Radiological Health
X-Ray Program Update

November 2009

The Division of Radiological Health and Safety Regulations has implemented a new set of Radiation Protection Regulations. An electronic copy can be obtained by going to the Virginia Department of Health's website at: http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/epidemiology/radiological_health/regulations.htm and accessing the link: Title 12, Agency 5, Chapter 481. If you find errors in the regulations, please submit written comments so they may be reviewed.

Effective March 4, 2009, the fee for x-ray machine registration has been changed to the following:

For Dental, Podiatry, Bone Density, & Veterinary - $50.00 per machine every 3 years

For Chiropractic, Medical, & Hospitals - $ 50.00 per machine annually

Certain forms have been revised, Notice to Employees; Radiation Safety Procedures; Operators List; and List of Private Inspectors. They are available on the VDH website at: http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/formfeed/index.asp Both printed and Adobe versions are available upon request.

Facilities should be aware of a fundamental change in the concept of a Quality Management Program. This requires individuals working with radiographic equipment to be aware of radiographic technique factors during patient examinations as well as the imaging system itself. A basic practice of radiologic technology is to keep occupational and patient dose as low as reasonably achievable (ALARA). ALARA can be achieved by one or more of the following factors:

1. Using proper radiographic technique to keep patient dose low; yet, maintain good image quality.
2. Using the correct film/screen combination.
3. Implementing proper processor maintenance which includes; changing chemicals, cleaning the processor, and checking temperature.

The facility shall have the responsibility for directing the operation of the x-ray systems under their administrative control. Part of this requires an appropriate technique chart, written or electronic, be available for the technologist's use. This should be reviewed during the inspection by your inspector. As more equipment is being installed with solid state image receptors, facilities should adjust their technique factors to accommodate the lower radiation exposures while maintaining good diagnostic image quality.

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