

NRRPT® NEWS

National Registry of Radiation Protection Technologists

February 2009 Edition

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Chairman's Message



Dave Biela

I hope that the holidays were good to everyone. As I am writing this there is a severe storm warning with the potential of two feet of snow and 30 mile an hour winds. The ground has been covered with snow since November 16th. The ski places love it and have been opened since the week before Thanksgiving. For all of you non-skiers I hope you are in warmer weather. In case you are wondering where I am

writing this from, it is Western New York, about 50 miles South of Buffalo.

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This past October, Bob Wills and I went to the Beaver Valley Power Station in Pennsylvania to present the Charles D. (Bama) McKnight award to Mr. Milt Shaw. Bob will talk more about the award and the presentation further in this newsletter, but I wanted to talk about Beaver Valley. The reception we received from the entire staff there was great. Mr. Russ Pucci along with Marianne Spanik set up the day's events and took care of us. During my 32 plus years in the nuclear industry (military and DOE) I had never had the opportunity to visit a power station, so from the morning staff meeting to the end of day tour inside the facility I really enjoyed myself. I even managed to come away from there with a few of their safety program ideas to take back with me. I would like to thank Stan Baker the Radiation Protection Manager and Brian Tuite the Training Manager for their support of the NRRPT. Their hospitality was second to none. Stan, Brian and the

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Ronald Schrotke Memorial

by Ronald L. Kathren, CHP

Ronald C. Schrotke, Sr., NRRPT (1931-2008)

It is again with great sadness that I report the passing of yet another close friend and colleague in the health physics community at Hanford. On September 18, 2008, Ronald C. Schrotke, Sr. peacefully passed away at the age of 77 at his retirement home on the Oregon coast after a 4-year struggle with heart disease. Ron was born and raised in Portland, OR. He served in the Air Force in Alaska during the Korean War and married Phyllis Andersen upon his return to Portland in 1954. The following year they moved to the Tri-Cities where Ron began his career in radiation safety as a radiation monitor for General Electric, then the prime contractor for the Hanford Nuclear Reservation. By diligent study and application to his work, he was promoted to the professional ranks as a specialist. In 1965 Ron joined Battelle Pacific Northwest Laboratories as a Health Physics Regulatory Auditor. In 1976 he was promoted to Radiation Protection Supervisor; a position he held until his retirement in 1991.

Ron held a number of special technical assignments over his career, including the retrieval of a steam generator from the Surrey plant and oversight of its shipment to Hanford for disposal. However, the capstone of his career was the powerful leading role he played in the formation and development of the National Registry of Radiation Protection Technologists (NRRPT). During the initial formative stages of the NRRPT in 1976, Ron served as the representative of the Columbia Chapter of the Society, personally playing a leading role in the establishment of that body. He was instrumental in ensuring that those who were admitted to the NRRPT met suitable educational and experience standards, and conformed to a rigid code of ethics. He was selected to be a member of the original Panel of Examiners of NRRPT, contributing significantly to the development of the early examination protocol. In 1979 he was elected Secretary-Treasurer of NRRPT, and Chairman of the Panel of Examiners in 1982, a position he held until his retirement in 1991. He was made a Fellow of the Health Physics Society in 1991, and in 1997 was the recipient of the prestigious Arthur F. Humm, Jr. Memorial Award for his years of dedicated service and contributions to the NRRPT.

Ron was passionately dedicated to encouraging and providing educational opportunities and to gaining recognition for Radiation Protection Technologists (RPT) and its constituent members. He worked diligently to ensure that the required examination was relevant and meaningful, and that the Code of Ethics was strictly followed. His paper "Characteristics of NRRPT Applicants and Examination Success" presented at the 13th annual mid-year symposium of the HPS (PNL-SA-7756, published in Health Physics Training, W. L. Yanger and P. J. Manley, eds., Honolulu, December 10-13, 1979 pp. 397-406), of which I was privileged to serve as junior author, reveals much of his deep abiding commitment to the development and recognition of the RPT.

Ron's efforts to develop capabilities in others were not limited to the NRRPT. He was never too busy to help others with their problems, and frequently provided practical solutions to potentially vexing problems. He taught numerous in-service training courses, and served the youth of his community as a Scoutmaster for a dozen years. Ron is survived by his wife Phyllis, son Ron and daughter-in-law Lynn, and sister Lois. He will be missed and warmly remembered by them and by all who knew him as a friend and colleague.

See page 8 for more on Ronald Schrotke, Sr.

From Russia to America – The Travels of an RRPT

by Konstantin Povod

In 1995 I came to the United States. I was 30 back then. At that point in time I could put on my resume 6 years of education in the Moscow Physical Engineering Institute majoring in “Dosimetry and Radiation Protection” (they don’t use the term “Health Physics” there), three years working in the Nuclear Reactor Research Institute in Dimitrovgrad, Russia and also three years working in Belarus performing environmental survey and research in areas contaminated after Chernobyl accident. As it turned out, my education and my experience were sufficient to let me transition flawlessly into the American Health Physics.

For about seven years I worked for an analytical laboratory, mixing my favorite radiation safety with (much less favorite) chemistry, and now for almost five years I’ve been working as a Health Physicist for the University of Illinois at Chicago.

Looking back into these two parts of my professional career separated by “iron curtain” I will try to share my evaluation of the similarities and differences in the Health Physics profession in the United States and in what was formerly known as the USSR.

The relative ease of my transition into US Health Physics surely points to the common background, radiation physics. The terms, units, definitions, formulas and underlying math are all the same. Believe it or not, but inverse square law applies to Russians as much as it applies to Americans! My college diploma was evaluated by American Foreign Education Evaluation Organization and was found to be equivalent to a Master’s Degree in Health Physics from an American college. But there are also some notable differences, as in organization of health physics education. There were no elective courses. All courses and their sequence was the same for everybody working towards certain major. Besides health physics subjects, such as dosimetry, shielding, radiation detection instruments, radiation biology, microdosimetry, we had a lot of higher math, theoretical and nuclear physics, computer programming, as well as such engineering disciplines as electronics, blueprinting and resistance of materials. Looking back, I must say that whoever developed Health Physics courses for the USSR’s colleges and universities knew what they were doing. Upon completion of this course, you should have felt equally confident making presentation at a conference, developing gamma-spectrum analyzing software, or handling a soldering gun to fix your GM counter or making alterations to your HV power supply.

Radiation protection standards and limits in the USSR were quite similar and in general based on the ICRP publications. The difference was in presentation and implementation of these limits. The USSR’s National Commission on Radiation Protection (NCRP) periodically reviewed limits, standards, rules and practices and issued “Radiation Safety Norms and Basic Sanitary Rules” book. This pocket size (5”x8”, 160 pages) book was all the official information on radiation protection you needed to know. And it also included ALI and DAC tables and some other related reference information! Quite a difference to all the CFR’s, NUREG’s, state Administrative Codes, etc.

I see a couple of reasons for such an obvious difference in a sheer volume of radiation-related official documentation. For one, here, in the United States, every term, procedure, record, limit has to be defined in a meticulous detail. You have to be able to defend your actions in a court of law, and in this situation your individual interpretation of a particular rule may be considered inadequate and serve as a ground for a violation notice, fine, license revocation, even criminal prosecution. In the Soviet Union all nuclear power plants, hospitals, research institutions and other organizations using radioactive materials or/and radiation producing machines were State-owned. There was no

point in imposing fines, as it would just move money from one State “pocket” into another. And why would a State commission revoke a license (or as it was called there, “Sanitary Passport”) of a State institution? Personal law suites against the State for radiation-induced damage were pretty much impossible. Granted, there still was personal responsibility of people in charge of radiation safety, but it would take a serious incident to trigger administrative or criminal investigation.

Another reason for a very brief and sketchy radiation safety rule-book in the USSR was staffing policy. Persons in charge of key radiation protection positions were almost exclusively graduates majoring in Health Physics. As I mentioned, the Health Physics course programs were developed by State commissions, approved for all colleges and Universities. Upon completion of these courses you were expected to be able to interpret, expand, detail and apply official radiation protection regulations to your particular workplace. Means and ways of implementation were left to your professional judgment.

As I already mentioned, dose limits in the Soviet Union were based on ICRP publications, so they were similar to the US ones, but there were also some differences. Three groups of “critical organs” were set: group I – whole body, gonads, red marrow; group II – muscle, liver, kidney, eyes, lungs and other organs not included in group I or III; group III – skin and extremities. There also were set three categories of exposed: A – occupationally exposed; B – “limited part of population”; and C – general population. The following dose limits were established:

Table 1. Equivalent dose limits, rem/year (USSR, 1988)

Category of exposed	Critical organ group		
	I	II	III
A (occupational)	5	15	30
B (“limited part of population”)	0.5	1.5	3

There was an additional condition that for women of childbearing age (< 40 year old) dose to the pelvic area may not exceed 1 rem in any 2 months.

No limit was set for general population. In the “Radiation Safety Norms and Basic Sanitary Rules” book there was included a general statement on necessity of “limiting general public exposure through the reduction of individual dose and through the limiting number of exposed individuals, in particular during medical X-ray studies, especially for pregnant women, children and adolescents”. I think, omission of general public dose limits was based on practical impossibility of monitoring these limits.

Category B, “limited part of population”, included individuals, who do not work with the sources of radiation directly, but who may be exposed to radiation due to location of their living quarters or work places. This would include, for example, people living in the vicinity of a nuclear reactor or working in a room adjacent to an X-ray machine.

Based on these dose limits, derived limits (ALI and DAC analogues) were established for Categories A (occupational) and B (limited part of population). I compared several occupational ALI’s and DAC’s, and they’re generally in the same ballpark, which is understandable taking into account similar dose limits and models used to convert radionuclide intake to dose. For Category B populations, water concentration limits were also set.

Also of interest may be limits on alpha and beta contamination:

Table 2. Surface contamination limits, dpm/cm² (USSR, 1988)

	Alpha		Beta
	Certain*	Others	
Skin, underwear, towels, inside surface of face mask	1	1	100
Protective clothing, inside surfaces of PPE	5	20	800
Surfaces inside constantly occupied rooms and outside surfaces of PPE worn in these rooms	5	20	2000
Surfaces inside periodically occupied rooms and outside surfaces of PPE worn in these rooms	50	200	8000

* *Certain* means alpha-emitting radionuclides with occupational DAC's less than 1×10^{-11} $\mu\text{Ci/ml}$.

The "Radiation Safety Norms and Basic Sanitary Rules" book also established waste disposal limits and procedures. Liquid waste was considered radioactive if its activity exceeded water concentration limits for Category B (limited part of population). Radioactive material users were allowed to dispose into the sewer liquid waste with concentrations of up to 10 times higher if 10-time dilution was ensured. Solid waste was considered radioactive if its activity exceeded $2 \cdot 10^{-7}$ Ci/kg for alpha- ($1 \cdot 10^{-8}$ Ci/kg for transuranic isotopes), $2 \cdot 10^{-6}$ Ci/kg for beta-, and $1 \cdot 10^{-7}$ gram-equivalent Ra/kg for gamma-emitters. Radionuclides with a half-life of 15 days or less were allowed to be stored for decay until their activity falls below these limits. No time limit was set for this decay in storage.

So those are some facts and numbers. As I see it, differences between US's and USSR's radiation safety programs are defined mostly by the socio-economical factors. I would not characterize either of them as being "better" or "more proper" than the other. Both have unique advantages and challenges. Also, please remember that my recollections refer back to late 80-s to early 90-s. I am sure Russian radiation safety went through some changes, of which I am not aware.

Continued from page 1

other RRPTs went out of there way to make us feel welcome. Thank you again for a very enjoyable day and your great support for the NRRPT.

The next board/panel meeting is taking place in San Antonio, TX from Jan 31st to Feb. 3rd. Some of the items on the agenda include; determining how the NRRPT can support the Center for Disease Control (CDC) in times of a nuclear emergency, POD casting training items on the Web site, and working with other organizations to deal with the manpower shortage projected during the next few decades. Board and Panel meetings are open to the membership.

The next U.S. exam right around the corner, and will be held on February 28th. I encourage our membership to help those sitting for the exam to prepare for it. I try to spend some time looking at different locations for technician job postings and it makes me feel good to see so many that say NRRPT preferred. The way that you represent the organization in the field and the hard work of many past and present Board and Panel members have been paramount in achieving the recognition of the Registry.

Sincerely,
 Dave Biela
 NRRPT, Chairman of the Board

Charles D. (Bama) McKnight Memorial Award Presented to Mr. Milton Shaw



Bob Wills, Milt Shaw, Dave Biela

In January 2005, the Charles D. (Bama) McKnight Memorial Award was established in honor of “Bama” because of his significant contributions to the NRRPT. “Bama” was one of the Registry’s great Pioneers as well as an exceptional Instructor/Teacher, one that you never forgot. “Bama” had the gift of making the technically difficult understandable and enjoyable.

This award is presented to persons who have given outstanding efforts in the radiation protection training field leading to increased knowledge and professionalism among Radiation Protection Technologists. The Awards Committee is chartered to deliberate on potential nominees for this recognition annually, however, the frequency of this award is at the sole discretion of the Board. Without any hesitation this is one of our highest awards we can bestow any individual. To be considered for this award the recipient must have demonstrated an outstanding effort in the field of radiation protection training.

I trust you can all understand how special this award is and I can say we (the Board) are very please to present the Charles D. (Bama) McKnight Memorial Award to Mr. Milton Shaw, FirstEnergy, Beaver Valley Nuclear Power Plant, RP Training Division.

Mr. Shaw has given over twenty years of his professional working life to the field of radiological controls training. Mr. Shaw has given after hours support to the contract technicians working at the Beaver Valley Nuclear Power Plant, and has shown a level of dedication and professionalism that his plant peers have seen throughout Milton's career.

I would like to thank all the folks at Beaver Valley NPP for their kind support of this award. Dave Biela (Chairman NRRPT) and myself could not have made this event as special as it was without the support of the Beaver Valley management. From department managers, to colleges of Milton, we were given first class treatment at the plant.

From the entire NRRPT organization, we wish Mr. Shaw the very best and know others can gain from his example.



Bob Wills
Awards Committee Chairman
NRRPT Board

**BIO ON OUR PAST BOARD MEMBER
/CURRENT PANEL MEMBER **
Tim Kirkham**

Tim's health physics career began as Pharmacy major at Purdue University back in 1977. Shortly thereafter he began questioning whether or not he wanted to be a drug pusher the rest of his life and subsequently went into the Health Physics program. In his 25+ years as a Health Physicist he has worked for Southern Company, Westinghouse Savannah River, Commonwealth Edison/Exelon, Constellation Energy, AECOM/ENSR and currently works for Chesapeake Nuclear Services as a Senior Consultant. Furthermore, Tim teaches a Graduate level Applied Health Physics course at Purdue University.



In 2000 he passed the NRRPT exam and in 2001 he joined the Panel of Examiners. In 2002 he was elected to the Board of Directors. He is also intimately involved in the national effort to recruit personnel into the field of health physics by working with NEI, the HPS and the NRRPT.

Tim's other interests include tennis, farming and paying for his twins college education (Texas A&M and Purdue).

Remembering Ronald C. Schrotke, Sr.

I was deeply saddened at the passing of my longtime friend and NRRPT colleague, Ron Schrotke. We first met when Ron hired on with General Electric's radiation monitoring department at the Hanford project in the late 50's. We worked together off and on over the years and we both became NRRPT members in the mid-70's when the Registry first started.

We traveled to many NRRPT conferences together over the years and became very close friends. We both served on the Exam Panel and subsequently became members of the Board of Directors. We received much guidance from our "NRRPT Fathers", such as, Don Marshall, Art Humm and others, whom I still admire.

Looking back, passing the exam was one of the highlights of our careers and I am still very proud of that accomplishment. Though I had not seen Ron in several years, I knew that we would always remain friends. I have fond memories of our times together and can only say, "I thank him for the memories and for his distinguished service to the NRRPT".

Claude D. Hooker
NRRPT Member Emeritus '96
Class of 1976

When the NRRPT Board of Directors hired me as the first Executive Secretary, Ron was very supportive of my appointment. He was always helpful throughout my tenure. I will miss him very much.

Bunnie Hooker
NRRPT Member Emeritus '96
NRRPT Executive Secretary 1985-1989

I am sorry to hear of Ron's passing. He was a great friend. Ron was a very hard worker for the Registry and he believed strongly in our goals.

Our exam question bank is our most important asset and Ron was very involved (as was Dick Weetman and many others) in building the exam bank in the early years. Even after long hours of work though, Ron would contribute to the after work fun that was a big part of the camaraderie we all experienced during those early years.

Ann and I will always have fond memories of Ron.

Paul Lovendale
NRRPT Member Emeritus '99
Chairman of the Board 1986 - 1992

I was sadden to hear Ron Schrotke had passed away. Ron was one of the early members of the NRRPT Board. An original Board had been selected and we realized the Hanford area was not represented. We solicited nominees from Hanford and Ron was selected.

I first met Ron in New York City where some Board and Panel of Examiners members were meeting to put together the first exam. Ron was a great help then, and also during the next several years as a member of the Board and the Panel. The By-Laws, test development, exam procedures, and the way we do business are still influenced by Ron's contributions.

Ron and I were very close friends. When we both were no longer active on the Board or Panel, we frequently kept in contact. I'm sorry to say that as the years past we talked less frequently. All of the early members will remember Ron for his dedication to the NRRPT organization. Our thoughts go out to his wife Phyllis and son Ron Jr.

Don Marshall
NRRPT Member Emeritus '95
First Chairman of the Board

NRRPT Salary Survey 2008

The NRRPT Board of Directors is looking for your support and a few minutes of your time to complete this very important salary survey. In order to provide our membership the kind of information and support needed in today's changing nuclear environments we (The Board) feels strongly that a yearly study of Radiation Protection Technologists is needed. With new plant construction, an ageing work force, and an increasing demand for personnel in all fields of health physics, salary and vocation information are very important to our membership. Information collected during this survey will remain confidential

Thank you for taking time to fill out this survey.

Sincerely,
Bob Wills

NRRPT, Board of Directors

1. Experience by Education Level: Pick the highest level you have obtained

- a High School
- d Associate Degree
- c Bachelor's Degree
- d Master Degree
- e PhD

2. Years employed in radiation protection

- a <6
- b 6 to 15 years
- c >15 years

3. Are you also a CHP

- a Yes
- b No

4. Job Responsibility

- a Technician
- b Supervisor
- c Professional Staff / Radiological Engineering
- d RPM/RSO
- e University RSC
- f Medical RSC

5. Field of Employment

- a Federal Government
- b State Government
- c Medical Facility

d Consulting Firm

e University

f National Laboratory

g Government Contractor

h Nuclear Power Utility

i Other Commercial

j Other Research

6. Location of Employment:

- a Contractor US Wide
- b North East
- c Mid Atlantic States
- d South East
- e Mid West
- f South West
- g West Coast

7. Salary Range per year

- a < \$15,000
- b \$15,000 to \$30,000
- c \$30,000 to \$45,000
- d \$45,000 to \$65,000
- e \$65,000 to \$85,000
- f \$85,000 to \$100,000
- g \$100,000 to \$150,000
- h > \$150,000

Please return form to Bob Wills (robert.wills@gel.com) or the NRRPT Office (nrrpt@nrrpt.org) or fax to 509-582-3501.

2009 USA NRRPT Exam Dates

February 28, 2009

Deadline for application: December 12, 2009

August 2009 - To be determined

**2008 Canadian
NRRPT Exam Dates**

October 13, 2009

Deadline for application: September 4, 2009

Application Fee: \$250

Retake Fee: \$125

Late Fee: \$50

2009 NRRPT Sustaining Dues

**Ask your fellow registered member --
have you paid your 2009 dues?**

It's not too late to submit your 2009 sustaining dues and be included in the 2009 Handbook! If you haven't paid yet, please submit to the Executive Secretary's office as soon as possible!

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San Onofre Nuclear Generating Station is proud to have over 60 registered NRRPT members in our Health Physics, Training, Chemistry, Engineering, Operations, Oversight, and Maintenance organizations. We are especially proud that Kelli Gallion of our HP Planning group was a member of the Panel of Examiners, Board of Directors, and was formerly the NRRPT Chairman.

San Onofre is a three unit site with two operating 1170 MWe Combustion Engineering reactors and one early Westinghouse unit in decommissioning. The station is located in Southern California on the Pacific Ocean and midway between San Diego and Los Angeles.

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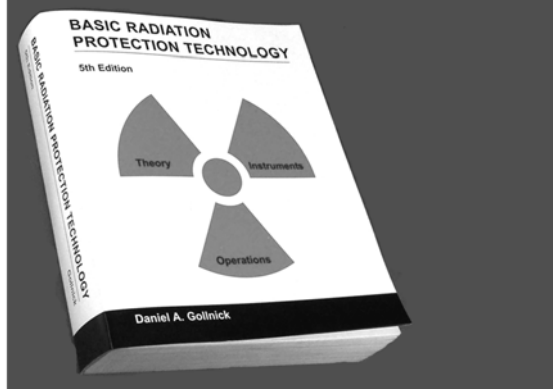
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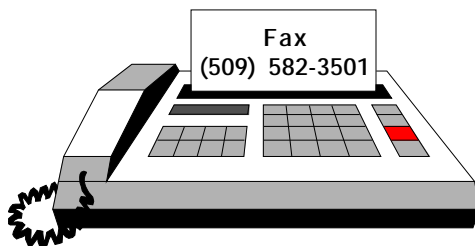
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