

Radiology Compliance Branch

RADIATION PROTECTION SECTION



Division of Health Service Regulation • N.C. Department of Health and Human Services

If you own, possess or use X-ray equipment in North Carolina you are required to:

- Have all equipment registered with this agency.
- Report when equipment has been rendered not in use, sold or transferred immediately.
- Notify the Radiation Protection Section if you sell your practice, or you will continue to be billed for those units.
- Review your Notice of Registration for accuracy. If any information on the form has changed, the section's staff should be notified immediately. This includes equipment, address, contacts and contact information.
- Provide access to authorized representatives who have the authority to enter any facility at all reasonable times for the purpose of determining compliance. Reasonable hours are the operating hours of the business Monday through Friday.

If you buy a practice, all documents regarding equipment should be obtained from the previous owner during the purchase agreement. Another option is that you may select a service provider and have the necessary work performed prior to beginning to operate your equipment. Any items not in compliance will have to be brought into compliance. Once a facility is registered, inspections may occur at any time thereafter. You do not need to contact the section to schedule an inspection.

An inspection may take one to four hours with a smaller practice and one or more days for larger facilities. Inspection frequency varies from every two to four years depending on the type of practice. Inspections are unannounced and based on performance.

Performance-based means the radiation safety policies written specific to your facility will be reviewed. Inspectors will observe radiation safety practices in your facility and may interview employees about radiation safety practice in the facility. Records related to equipment and registration are reviewed, which takes up the majority of the time.

Equipment measurements in the rooms can be made with little interference in patient flow. Typically, a radiographic room may take 15 to 20 minutes, fluoroscopic rooms may take 20 to 30 minutes, dental intra-oral rooms may take five minutes and cephalometric rooms may take 20 to 30 minutes. The section's inspectors generally

coordinate with the initial contact at the facility to work through the rooms without impeding the work flow and locate an area where they can do record review when equipment rooms are not available.

Upon completion of the inspection, an exit interview is offered with the desire that the most responsible persons can participate. Inspectors will conduct an informal summary of the inspection results. Some situations require rule review and research after inspection. Final inspection results are mailed to the facility from the section's central office following the conclusion of an inspection. Response times to violations are 15 calendar days for a Level 1 and 30 business days for levels II, III and IV from receipt of the letter. If unable to participate in the exit interview, a business card is left so that the inspector can be contacted at the office to answer any questions or concerns regarding the inspection process.

An inspection checklist and other materials are available at <http://www.ncradiation.net>. The Web site is a wonderful tool to assist you in preparation for an inspection or registering equipment. If you click on X-Ray, a state map with contact information will provide the regional inspector name and phone number in your area. If you need help with the registration process, please call the Raleigh office at (919) 814-2250 and ask for the registration coordinator.

