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# Newsletter



## NEW ENGLAND CHAPTER OF THE HEALTH PHYSICS SOCIETY

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## ***Judge Orders Governor to Open State to Plutonium Shipments***

*Submitted by Mike Whalen*

**June 18, 2002 (AP)** AIKEN, S.C. — A federal judge Tuesday prohibited Gov. Jim Hodges from taking any action to block U.S. Energy Department plutonium shipments, which could begin as early as this weekend.

Last Friday, Hodges dispatched state police to the Savannah River Site near the Georgia state line to begin inspecting vehicles for the radioactive material, which is to be brought in from the closed Rocky Flats weapons facility in Colorado. The governor ordered authorities to prevent anyone from transporting plutonium into South Carolina.

Hodges said he would not block the shipments if ordered by a court but his emergency order would stand until then.

U.S. District Judge Cameron Currie told Hodges on Friday that physical blockades of the plutonium shipments are illegal and present a possible terrorist target, but she did not specifically order Hodges to refrain from blocking roads.

In her ruling Tuesday, Currie blasted the governor for not heeding her warning.

"I took Governor Hodges at his word, and I now see this as a mistake" Currie said. "It is a sad day for South Carolina when the governor ... who has taken an oath to uphold the Constitution must be ordered by a court to obey it."

Hodges did not immediately return a phone call seeking comment, but a spokeswoman said he planned a news conference Tuesday afternoon.

The Energy Department had asked Currie for a temporary restraining order, but the judge said the injunction was permanent.

Energy officials said they appreciated the judge's ruling.

"The court's decision reinforces its earlier ruling that the department may ship plutonium from its Rocky Flats, Colo., facility to the Savannah River Site, and we intend to proceed with those shipments," said Energy Secretary Spencer Abraham.

Agency spokesman Joe Davis said the shipments could begin as early as Saturday. "We're in the process of getting them ready," he said.

The decision is the latest development in the lawsuit Hodges filed last month to prevent Energy officials from transporting the weapons-grade plutonium to South Carolina. The

Democratic governor, who is up for re-election this fall, has said the material poses too many health and environmental risks and threatened to lie down in the road if necessary to block the trucks.

The Energy Department wants to move six metric tons of plutonium to SRS as part of the agency's effort to clean up and close the Rocky Flats facility.

Energy officials say the radioactive material will be converted into fuel for nuclear reactors, but Hodges worries the conversion program will never be funded and the plutonium will be stored permanently in South Carolina.

Last Thursday, Currie rejected Hodges' arguments that the Energy Department was in violation of federal environmental policy and opened the door for shipments to begin immediately.

Hodges has appealed that ruling to the U.S. 4th Circuit Court of Appeals in Richmond, Va.

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The new Chapter Year is starting very soon!

*Tara Bandini*

In August, the New England Chapter will usher in yet another new Chapter year; the first meeting will be held in September. They come and go like clockwork, the first meeting of the new year is almost like starting school again for me. Everyone is back from their relaxing vacations, ready to tackle the tasks that lay ahead for the fall. After an entire summer "off", it's nice to look forward to re-connecting with our network of professionals. And with the joint meetings coming up, we just may meet some new ones!

This year seems like it has been an unusually busy one. For all of us, September 11 re-affirmed the importance of the work that we do. However, it also forced many of us into a frenzy over anything and everything radioactive. We had some wonderful meetings this past chapter year, along with a great Annual Meeting in which to share ideas and gather information.

The next year promises to be more of the same and I for one am looking forward to catching up with my fellow professionals (and friends) at the start of the new year.

## Some notes from the new Ms.

### President-Elect....

*Margaret McCarthy*

The first meeting of the 2002--2003 year will be at the Publick House in Sturbridge, Massachusetts.

The date is Thursday the 19<sup>th</sup> of September, and it will be a joint meeting with the Connecticut Chapter. Peter Mas will speak on the new revision of 10CFR35.

### The second meeting:

Symposium on Homeland Security – Albany, NY

The roster for the 2002—2003 meetings is being organized. The NECHPS has joined with the North East NY [Albany] and Greater NY [NYC] Chapters of the HPS to sponsor a major symposium on Homeland Security. The location is the Marriott Hotel in Albany NY on Tuesday 08 October 2002. The confirmed speakers are persons of note in the Health Physics Society and governmental officials responsible for homeland security. The symposium is limited in the number of attendees for the conference and a lesser number for the luncheon. Further information in the August 2002 HPS Newsletter.

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## ***Experts Wanted***

The Massachusetts Radiation Control Program is seeking individuals interested in serving as volunteer consultants to the Radiation Control Program's Nuclear Incident Advisory Team (NIAT). NIAT is the emergency response action arm of Radiation Control Program that supplies twenty-four hour response to incidents within the Commonwealth involving radiation.

Individuals with expertise in all types of disciplines are needed to augment the existing network of expert radiation professionals who have volunteered to assist the NIAT in times of need.

If you are interested, please send a letter of interest, along with your resume to:

Robert M. Hallisey, Director  
MA Radiation Control Program  
174 Portland Street, 5th Floor  
Boston, MA 02114

...And one more job posting:

### Medical Health Physicist

Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center  
Boston, MA

Reporting to the Radiation Safety Officer, the Medical Health Physicist is responsible for a comprehensive range of medical health physics safety work from clinical use of radiation to use of radioisotopes in research requiring the highest precision and accuracy.

Requires attention to detail, strong verbal and interpersonal skills in order to explain radiation principles and practices and to aid radiation workers in the incorporation of safety skills in their daily work. Proven ability as a team player is a prerequisite for this position. Requires a Master's degree in Health Physics and two years health physics experience or a Bachelor's degree in Health Physics and four years health physics experience. IS and web page experience a plus.

Position available immediately  
For information contact:

Christina Venckus  
Human Resources  
Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center  
330 Brookline Avenue  
Boston, MA 02215  
617 632- 9406 ( phone)  
617 632- 8155 ( fax)  
**[cvenckus@caregroup.harvard.edu](mailto:cvenckus@caregroup.harvard.edu)**

## **BIG Employment Announcement!**

### **Radiation Health Physicist I-II Three Full-time Positions Available**

NH Bureau of Radiological Health, Office of Community and Public Health

**Salary Range:** \$29,776 – \$46,059

Location: Concord, New Hampshire

**Description:** Assists in evaluations, inspections and review of license applications for the receipt, possession, use, transfer, ownership, or disposal of radioactive material and/or performs evaluations, inspections and registration of radiation-generating equipment. Participates in incident/accident response involving radioactive material or radiation-generating equipment.

**Requirements: Education:** Bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university with major studies in health physics, nuclear engineering, radiation physics, bionucleonics, physics, chemistry, or biological science. The course work shall include math through basic calculus.

Without one of the **specific** degrees noted above, the individual could still be considered as meeting the general requirements by providing documentation of completion of one of the following:

- Documentation of completion of any bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university, plus documentation of completion of the Navy Nuclear School for the radioactive materials career path.
- Documentation of completion of any bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university, plus ARRT certification relating to radiation-generating equipment for the radiation-generating equipment career path.
- Documentation of completion of any bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university, plus CHP certification.

**Experience:** Three years' experience working in the field of radiological health, health physics or with radiation sources.

**License/Certification:** Valid driver's license and/or access to transportation for statewide travel

**Notes:**

Open until filled

37.5 hour work week

Fully paid family health plan

No state income or sales tax

**To apply,** send cover letter and resume by e-mail, fax, or mail to:

Veronica C. Malmberg, Administrator IV

Office of Community and Public Health

6 Hazen Drive

Concord, NH 03301

603-271-4657 telephone

603-271-4783 fax

**[vmalmberg@dhhs.state.nh.us](mailto:vmalmberg@dhhs.state.nh.us)**