**How to Purchase Radioactive Materials**

As with the purchase of any item by University personnel, radioactive materials purchases are subject to the policies of the University of Texas Purchasing Office. In addition, purchases of radioactive materials are governed by conditions in the radioactive materials license granted to the University by the Texas Department of State Health Services. As a result, there are specific procedures that must be followed if you wish to purchase radioactive materials.

A condition on the University’s radioactive materials license requires that **all purchases of radioactive materials be made using a purchase order (PO) created in PointPlus**. This condition is primarily in place due to the requirement that radioactive material orders be approved in advance by the University’s Radiation Safety Officer (RSO), and additionally, because radioactive materials must be tracked “from cradle to grave.” PointPlus automatically forwards radioactive materials purchase orders to the RSO for approval. PointPlus also transfers radioactive material data to our radioactive materials inventory application to initiate the tracking of the newly ordered radioactive material. Because a purchase order issued by PointPlus is required for radioactive materials purchases, you will note that radioactive materials are listed as one of the disallowed purchases when using a procurement card (State of Texas Official Use Only MasterCard commonly known as a “Procard”). **Therefore, use of a Procard to purchase radioactive materials is strictly forbidden and may result in the loss of the card.**

Creating a PO for a purchase of radioactive materials begins just like a PO for any other item. However, there are a few special requirements. All radioactive materials packages must be processed by Radiation Safety staff before they are delivered to the labs. Thus, you cannot list the lab address as the “Ship to:” address on the PO. Currently, all radioactive materials packages are processed in the EHS office (located at 1200 E Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd). Entering U-995 for the “Ship Center” will ensure that the order is delivered to the Radiation Safety Office. Commodity codes for radioactive materials are flagged in PointPlus such that a PO with any of those commodity codes is automatically forwarded to the RSO for approval. Two of the more commonly used commodity codes are Class 115 Item 15 (Chemicals, isotopically labeled) and Class 193 Item 84 (radioimmunoassay kits). It is critical that the correct commodity code be entered for a radioactive item so that PointPlus will forward the information to the RSO for approval. An incorrect commodity code may result in delays in delivery of the radioactive material, and may also place UT at risk for a regulatory violation. If you are unsure which commodity code to use, contact Radiation Safety for assistance.

Once the commodity code is entered, the quantity and units must be entered for the item. Radioactive materials have special units: curie (Ci), millicurie (mCi), and microcurie (uCi). As an example: a lab wants to order a radioactive material. The vendor sells the material as a single unit containing 0.5 millicuries of P-32 gamma ATP for $50. Instead of entering a quantity of “1”; unit of “each”; and a price of $50, you would enter a quantity of “0.5” (yes, fractional quantities are allowed); unit of “mCi”; and a price of $100. The extended price for the item will now be $50.00 (0.5 x $100 = $50.00). For the item description, enter a description of the radioactive material and not just a catalogue number. This full description helps streamline the RSO approval of the order. In the example above, you would enter “0.5 mCi P-32 gamma ATP [catalogue number].”

Once you select “Save Item Information,” PointPlus will request that you enter the OEHS details with the following message:

“**Please fill in the OEHS Details for this radioactive item.**”

Different labs are authorized for different types and amounts of radioactive materials, so PointPlus requests the **OEHS ID** and the **OEHS Formula**. The OEHS ID is the number that identifies a particular authorized user of radioactive materials (labs sometimes refer to this as their authorized user number or permit number). The OEHS Formula is the abbreviation for a particular type of radioisotope. Some of the more common radioisotopes (with OEHS Formula) purchased for use on campus are phosphorus-32 (P-32), sulfur-35 (S-35), hydrogen-3, aka tritium (H-3), and carbon-14 (C-14). Once the ID and Formula have been entered, select “Update Item Information.” At this point, PointPlus queries our radioactive material inventory application to verify that the lab is authorized for the particular isotope and quantity of radioactive material entered into the PO. If the lab is authorized for the material, the regular PO process will continue at this point. If the lab is not authorized, PointPlus will not let the PO process proceed. Note that if the OEHS Formula you enter is not listed on the drop-down from PointPlus, it will still be approved if the formula entered matches the one in our database (e.g., carbon-14 is currently listed erroneously as CS-14 in the list; however, entering C-14 in this box still works).

We are available to answer questions about the radioactive materials purchasing process. Please contact us at 512-471-3511 or radstaff@austin.utexas.edu.