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Commonly asked questions regarding dental unit surveys

What are the differences between registration and survey inspection due dates?

Dental offices will receive registration renewal information from the Missouri Radiation Control Program (MRCP) every two years. Review the equipment listed, make edits where necessary, and submit it back to the state. Surveys (inspections and testing of equipment) are due every 3 or 6 years depending on what equipment is installed at your office. The due dates are listed on the registration form you receive.

How often do I have to have my equipment surveyed?

Class D dental facilities are those that have panoramic, handheld, and/or intraoral wall units and must be tested (surveyed) every six years by a Missouri Qualified Expert.

Class E dental facilities have cone beam CT units installed, and the CBCT unit must be tested every three years; all other radiation units at the practice will be tested every six years.

What happens during a survey? Do we need to reschedule our patients?

Performing radiation surveys on dental equipment does not require you to clear the schedule. We are comfortable working in between patients as the rooms are cleaned to test the equipment and work with your staff. Our documents are prepared according to the brand and type of equipment that is installed at your office, so it is helpful to let us know if there are any changes to your registration form that you have on file with the MRCP prior to our arrival. However, we are quite used to making additions and deletions on the Radiation Safety Survey Summary Report that we electronically submit to the MRCP on your behalf after the testing is completed. We note each room number with the type and brand of equipment and also ensure the model and serial number match what is listed. Panoramic and CBCT units take anywhere from 30-45 minutes depending on the software processing speed as we take multiple exposures on every unit we test. We appreciate patients refrain from being scheduled for imaging on these units while testing is in progress. Scattered radiation surveys will also be taken during this time to ensure surrounding areas are not receiving high radiation doses.

We are expanding our office, and some dental radiation units are being relocated in a different area. Do they have to be retested?

Yes, any instance where a dental unit is moved to a different area, the machine must be retested, even if it is down the hall to a different room.

We are not due for testing yet, but we purchased and installed new equipment. When does it need to be tested?

If a CBCT unit was installed, it must be surveyed within 30 days by a Missouri Qualified Expert to be compliant. In addition, if your facility was a class D, it will now be a class E, where the CBCT unit will be needing inspection every 3 years.

If a panoramic unit, handheld unit, or intraoral wall mounted unit is installed or added, it must be surveyed within 90 days.

These units then become on the same survey cycle as the rest of the equipment in the office.

Our dental practice is due for inspection, but we are moving to a new office soon. What should we do?

Contact the MRCP and inform them of the approximate move-in date for the new location. Please let us know the timeframe as well, and we will have you scheduled appropriately; we will also note the new location on your QE Radiation Safety Survey form when we test the equipment.

Who submits the Qualified Expert Radiation Safety Summary Results Report to the MRCP?

After we perform the inspection on the dental x-ray equipment in your office, we complete the summary report that is required by the MRCP. Heldebrandt Consulting will submit this form to the state electronically on your behalf and copy you on the email as well for your records. You will receive an additional email with the physics documents for each radiation unit tested as well as the invoice.

In addition, we will contact you several months before your next survey is due. There is no penalty for testing a site within 364 days of the due date, and you will retain your original due date.

Our team at Heldebrandt Consulting looks forward to helping you with your required qualified expert radiation physics surveys in Missouri!