



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
U.S. ARMY HEALTH PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT AGENCY  
5109 LEESBURG PIKE  
FALLS CHURCH, VA 22041-3258



REPLY TO  
ATTENTION OF

30 OCT 1991

SGPS-PSP (40)

MEMORANDUM FOR SEE DISTRIBUTION

SUBJECT: Microwave Oven Radiation Control Program

1. References:

a. Memorandum, U.S. Army Environmental Hygiene Agency (USAEHA), HSHB-MR-LM, 10 August 1990, subject: Nonionizing Radiation Protection Consultation No. 24-42-0812-90, U.S. Army Microwave Oven Radiation Protection Program Review and Evaluation, January - June 1990.

b. USAEHA Technical Guide No. 153, April 1987, Guidelines for Controlling Potential Health Hazards from Radiofrequency Radiation.

c. Technical Bulletin, Medical No. 523, July 1980, Control of Hazards to Health from Microwave and Radio Frequency Radiation and Ultrasound.

d. Part 1030.10, Title 21, Code of Federal Regulations, Microwave Ovens.

2. The degree of hazards associated with microwave ovens has diminished and the conservation of resources is possible according to the Nonionizing Radiation Protection Consultation No. 24-42-0812-90 (ref 1a). TB MED 523 is currently under revision to reflect the following guidance about the Microwave Oven Radiation Control Program. Recommend you disseminate this information to your health, safety, and radiation protection personnel.

a. The Microwave Oven Radiation Control Program will continue to be monitored by USAEHA within the overall Army Radiofrequency Radiation Protection Program.

b. Surveys and Inspections.

(1) Initial or periodic comprehensive surveys and visual inspections combined with radiofrequency radiation leakage measurements on new or in-service microwave ovens are no longer required. However, performing surveys on request is encouraged. For this reason, units having the ability to perform comprehensive surveys (based on training and equipment) should maintain the capability. Those without the capability may request assistance from Commander, USAEHA, ATTN: HSHB-MR-LM, Aberdeen Proving Ground, Maryland 21010-5422.

(2) Privately-owned ovens used on Army facilities can be surveyed at your discretion. TB MED 523 and USAEHA TG No. 153 (refs 1c and 1b) can still be used for guidance when conducting the requested surveys.

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(3) Survey results that exceed 1 mW/cm<sup>2</sup> for new ovens or 5 mW/cm<sup>2</sup> for in-service ovens should be reported to Commander, USAEHA, ATTN: HSHB-MR-LM, Aberdeen Proving Ground, Maryland 21010-5422. USAEHA will maintain these survey results for future evaluations of the program.

(4) Those new or in-service microwave ovens that exceed the restrictions on permissible microwave oven leakage should be removed from service. Repairs should be made per Part 1030.10, Title 21, Code of Federal Regulations, Microwave Ovens (ref 1d).

(5) Routine monthly visual inspections are no longer needed. This modification does not affect sanitary inspections.

(6) Microwave Oven Radiation Control Programs should ensure that ovens designated for resale to the public pass a comprehensive survey. Use USAEHA TG No. 153 (ref 1b) for guidance.

(7) Instruments used for measuring radiation leakage should not be purchased. USAEHA will maintain calibrated instruments for temporary loan. To have individually owned instruments calibrated, contact Chief, U.S. Army District TMDE Support Center, ATTN: AMXTM-GC-W, White Sands Missile Range, NM 88002-5528, DSN 258-1865/1914.

(8) Records of requested comprehensive surveys are no longer needed, except for those surveys that are reported to USAEHA. (See para 2b(3).)

(9) A comprehensive inventory of microwave ovens is no longer needed.

(10) A comprehensive survey on repaired microwave ovens before they are placed in service is no longer required. However, the maintenance activity must continue to measure and document that the repaired ovens meet leakage requirements.

c. Training. Provide training for those individuals conducting requested comprehensive surveys. USAEHA will provide this training when needed. At a minimum, the training should include the following:

(1) Proper use of leakage measuring equipment.

(2) Techniques for completing visual inspections.

(3) Procedures for handling ovens that exceed the permissible leakage standards and for reporting the associated survey results.

3. The Microwave Oven Radiation Control Program will continue to follow these current guidelines:

a. Microwave ovens may be stacked.

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b. Radiofrequency radiation warning signs for cardiac pacemaker users are not required or recommended.

4. The staff point of contact is COL P. Myers, Radiological Hygiene Consultant, DSN 289-0132 or commercial (703) 756-0132. The USAEHA point of contact is Mr. C. Hicks, Chief, Microwave Branch, DSN 584-3353 or commercial (301) 671-3353.

FOR THE SURGEON GENERAL:



RONALD R. BLANCK  
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Director, Professional Services

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CF:

ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE ARMY FOR INSTALLATIONS AND LOGISTICS, ATTN: SAIL  
HQDA (SGPS-PSP)

COMMANDER

18TH MEDICAL COMMAND, ATTN: EAMC-5

U.S. ARMY PACIFIC ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH ENGINEERING AGENCY, SAGAMI

5TH PREVENTIVE MEDICINE UNIT, ATTN: EAMC-PMU

EACH U.S. ARMY MEDICAL DEPARTMENT ACTIVITY/U.S. ARMY MEDICAL CENTER/U.S. ARMY  
HEALTH CLINIC, ATTN: PREVENTIVE MEDICINE SERVICES

U.S. ARMY BIOMEDICAL RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT LABORATORY, ATTN: SGRD-UBG-0

7TH MEDICAL COMMAND, ATTN: AEUSG

10TH MEDICAL LABORATORY, ATTN: AEMML-PM-OIH

V CORPS, ATTN: AETV

VII CORPS, ATTN: AETSSU

DIRECTOR, U.S. ARMY MATERIEL COMMAND FIELD SAFETY ACTIVITY, ATTN: AMXOS-C

COMMANDANT, ACADEMY OF HEALTH SCIENCES, ATTN: HSHA-IPM