

Appendix: Some of the Major Uses of Radioisotopes in the United States.

Americium-241

Used in many smoke detectors for homes and businesses...to measure levels of toxic lead in dried paint samples...to ensure uniform thickness in rolling processes like steel and paper production...and to help determine where oil wells should be drilled.

Cadmium-109

Used to analyze metal alloys for checking stock, scrap sorting.

Calcium-47

Important aid to biomedical researchers studying the cellular functions and bone formation in mammals

Californium-252

Used to inspect airline luggage for hidden explosives...to gauge the moisture content of soil in the road construction and building industries...and to measure the moisture of materials stored in soils.

Carbon-14

Major research tool. Helps in research to ensure that potential new drugs are metabolized without forming harmful by-products. Used in biological research, agriculture, pollution control, and archeology.

Cesium-137

Used to treat cancerous tumors...to measure correct patient dosages of radioactive pharmaceuticals...to measure and control the liquid flow in oil pipelines...to tell researchers whether oil wells are plugged by sand...and to ensure the right fill level for packages of food, drugs and other products. (The products in these packages do not become radioactive.)

Chromium-51

Used in research in red blood cell survival studies

Cobalt-57

Used as a tracer to diagnose pernicious anemia

Cobalt-60

Used to sterilize surgical instruments...and to improve the safety and reliability of industrial fuel oil burners. Used in cancer treatment, food irradiation, gauges, and radiography.

Copper-67

When injected with monoclonal antibodies into a cancer patient, helps the antibodies bind to and destroy the tumor.

The regulation and use of radioisotopes in today's world

Curium-244

Used in mining to analyze material excavated from pits...and slurries from drilling operations.

Gallium-67

Used in medical diagnosis

Iodine-123

Widely used to diagnose thyroid disorders and other metabolic disorders including brain function.

Iodine-125

Major diagnostic tool used in clinical tests and to diagnose thyroid disorders. Also used in biomedical research.

Iodine-129

Used to check some radioactivity counters in in vitro diagnostic testing laboratories.

Iodine-131

Used to treat thyroid disorders. (Former President George Bush and Mrs. Bush were both successfully treated for Graves' disease, a thyroid disease, with iodine-131.)

Iridium-192

Used to test the integrity of pipeline welds, boilers and aircraft parts and in brachytherapy/tumor irradiation.

Iron-55

Used to analyze electroplating solutions and to detect the presence of sulphur in the air. Used in metabolism research.

Krypton-85

Used in indicator lights in appliances such as clothes washers and dryers, stereos, and coffeemakers...to gauge the thickness of thin plastics and sheet metal, rubber, textiles and paper... and to measure dust and pollutant levels.

Nickel-63

Used to detect explosives, and in voltage regulators and current surge protectors in electronic devices, and in electron capture detectors for gas chromatographs.

Phosphorus-32

Used in molecular biology and genetics research.

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Phosphorus-33

Used in molecular biology and genetics research.

Plutonium-238

Has powered more than 20 NASA spacecraft since 1972.

Polonium-210

Reduces the static charge in production of photographic film and other materials

Promethium-147

Used in electric blanket thermostats...and to gauge the thickness of thin plastics, thin sheet metal, rubber, textile and paper.

Radium-226

Makes lighting rods more effective.

Selenium-75

Used in protein studies in life science research.

Sodium-24

Used to locate leaks in industrial pipelines...and in oil well studies.

Strontium-85

Used to study bone formation and metabolism.

Strontium-90

Used in survey meters by schools, the military and emergency management authorities. Also used in cigarette manufacturing sensors and medical treatment.

Sulphur-35

Used in genetics and molecular biology research.

Technetium-99m

The most widely used radioactive pharmaceutical for diagnostic studies in nuclear medicine. Different chemical forms are used for brain, bone, liver, spleen and kidney imaging and also for blood flow studies.

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Thallium-201

Used in nuclear medicine for nuclear cardiology and tumor detection.

Thallium-204

Measures the dust and pollutant levels on filter paper...and gauges the thickness of plastics, sheet metal, rubber, textiles and paper.

Thoriated Tungsten

Used in electric arc welding rods in construction, aircraft, petrochemical and food processing equipment industries. They produce easier starting, greater arc stability and less metal contamination.

Thorium-229

Helps fluorescent lights last longer.

Thorium-230

Provides coloring and fluorescence in colored glazes and glassware.

Tritium

Major tool for biomedical research. Used for life science and drug metabolism studies to ensure the safety of potential new drugs...for self-luminous aircraft and commercial exit signs...for luminous dials, gauges and wrist watches...to produce luminous paint, and for geological prospecting and hydrology.

Uranium-234

Used in dental fixtures like crowns and dentures to provide a natural color and brightness.

Uranium-235

Fuel for nuclear power plants and naval nuclear propulsion systems...and used to produce fluorescent glassware, a variety of colored glazes and wall tiles.

Xenon-133

Used in nuclear medicine for lung ventilation and blood flow studies.

Courtesy of Management Information Systems, Inc.