

Self-Luminous Exit Signs

Off-Site Source Recovery Program Fact Sheet

Background:


Self-luminous EXIT signs (and other self-luminous indicators) may contain the radioactive gas tritium. These self-luminous signs or markers are used anywhere the public may need a rapid exit path. This includes facilities such as office buildings, theaters, stores, schools, and churches.

Those who possess tritium EXIT signs are general licensees of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) or an Agreement State. Each owner is subject to certain reporting and handling requirements, including proper disposal of unwanted or unused items containing tritium.

According to the NRC¹, tritium EXIT signs or markers “pose little or no threat to public health and safety and do not constitute a security risk. However, regulations require proper recordkeeping and disposal of all radioactive material. Proper handling is also important, a damaged or broken sign could cause radioactive contamination of the immediate vicinity, requiring a potentially expensive clean up.”

What to look for:

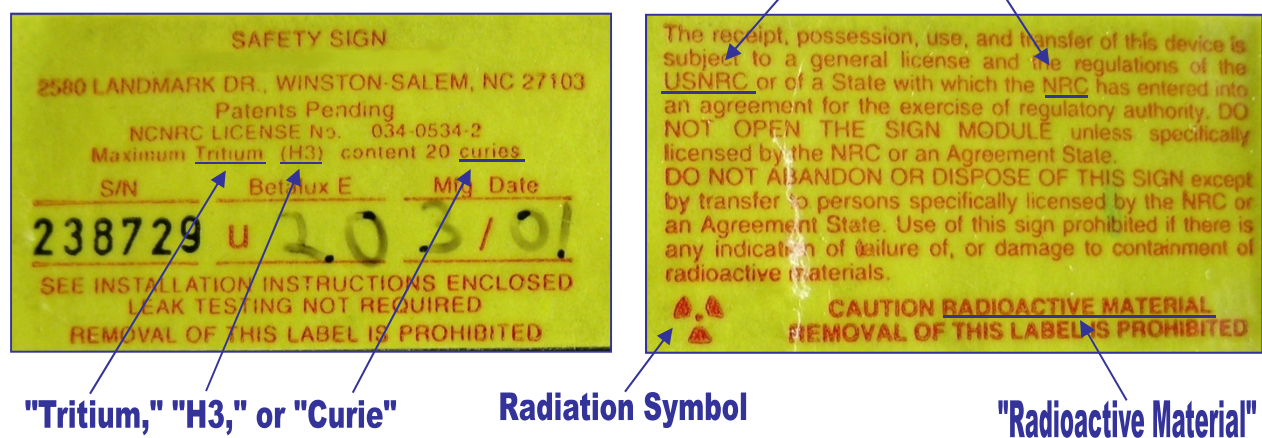
Unfortunately, not all self-luminous signs are marked exactly the same. Different indicators may be used to determine if the sign contains radioactive tritium or not. Observe the labels and markings on the original packaging or on the bottom, side, or back of the unit. Also refer to the owner’s operating manual. If you see any of the following, the device does indeed contain radioactive material:

- The radiation symbol in any size or color -- 
- Any of these words: “Radioactive,” “Tritium,” “Curie,” “Becquerel,” or “Nuclear Regulatory Commission”
- Any of these abbreviations: “H3,” “H-3,” “Ci,” “GBq,” “TBq,” “NRC,” or “USNRC”

If none of these markings occur, chances are the device does not contain radioactive material.

[Please see the back of this fact sheet to find out what to do with unwanted tritium devices.]

Common Markings



¹For more information visit -- <http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/doc-collections/fact-sheets/fs-tritium.html> and NRC [Regulatory Issue Summary 2006-25](#)

What to do if you find a self-luminous item containing tritium:

Never tamper with a tritium EXIT signs or attempt to remove the radioactive sources. Doing so may lead to the spread of radioactive contamination. Since the tritium gas is odorless, colorless, and tasteless, only special instruments can detect its presence.

Do not remove the warning label. It is unlawful to abandon or dispose of self-luminous signs containing tritium except by transfer to persons specifically licensed by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission or by an Agreement State. This would typically be a manufacturer, distributor, licensed radioactive waste broker, or a licensed low-level radioactive waste disposal facility. Tritium EXIT signs must not be thrown in the trash.

Company contact information is provided in the owners manual; and the name and/or address of the manufacturer appears on the label. The contact information for several manufacturers and distributors of self-luminous tritium signs is provided below. Perform an Internet search for brand names not shown.

Partial List of Manufacturers/Distributors:

Company	Website	Phone
Self-Powered Lighting, Inc.	http://www.self-powered.com	(800) 777-9399 (484) 595-9130
SRB Technologies, Inc.	http://www.srbtechnologies.com	(800) 552-0098 (336) 659-2610
Isolite Corp or Safety Light Corp.	http://www.isolite.com	(800) 888-5483 (610) 647-8200
EvenLite, Inc.	http://www.evenlite.com	(800) 872 0879 (215) 244-4204
Best Lighting Products, Inc.	http://www.bestlighting.net	(740) 964-1198
Shield Source Incorporated	http://www.shieldsource.com	(800) 664-1405 (705) 743-6146
Symbolic Displays, Inc. or Surelite Limited	http://www.symbolicdisplays.com	(714) 258-2811
Contractor Lighting & Supply, Inc.	http://www.contractorlighting.com	877-664-5483



Look for warning labels on back, side, or bottom of device.

Tritium EXIT signs must NOT be disposed of as normal trash

Tritium EXIT signs are NOT eligible for recovery by OSRP



Contact the OSRP Office:

Email: osrp@lanl.gov
Phone: 505.606.0362
Toll Free: 877.676.1749
Fax: 505.665.7913