



Missouri Radiation Control Program Guidance Document/Frequently Asked Question

See below for regulatory guidance on the following issue. If you have additional questions, you may contact the Missouri Radiation Control Program at MRCP@health.mo.gov or 573-751-6083

Guidance on choosing a Qualified Expert (QE) in Radiation Safety (updated Aug 2015)

As a rule, Qualified Experts are independent consultants, and Per 19 CSR 20-10.010(17), the Missouri Radiation Control Program (MRCP) only evaluates and approves the QE's ability to perform dependable radiation safety surveys based on their education and experience. No other warranty as to the QE services is either expressed or implied by MRCP. It must be noted that MRCP has no influence on either pricing structure or the availability of any individual QE. Having said that, the following may provide some assistance:

Availability of QE Services

MRCP registers and approves QE's based on training and expertise. As part of the registration process, each QE indicates whether or not he/she wishes to be placed on a publically-available list of radiation safety consultants who routinely accept new clients. However, despite the appearance on this list, the availability of a particular QE may be extremely limited, depending on supply and demand at any given time. It is in your facility's best interest to secure a QE survey early in the process, well in advance of the QE survey due date assigned, allowing additional time to compare QE's, make scheduling the QE survey in a given timeframe easier, and help ensure that you remain in compliance with applicable radiation safety rules. In addition to the generally available QE, MRCP also makes a shorter list available of the **Most Active QE's** that have areas of expertise in the most common equipment types (dental, radiographic, veterinary,) have been registered with MRCP for at least one year, and have conducted a minimum of six (6) inspections in the last year. It is possible using the **Most Active QE's** list may be to your advantage as a starting point. Both lists are available on our website:

<http://health.mo.gov/safety/radprotection/>

Which QE should I choose?

Although 19 CSR 20-10.050 requires that your facility utilize an approved Qualified Expert to ensure compliance with radiation safety regulations, the specific QE you use is a facility decision, as long as the QE is recognized by MRCP as having an area of expertise that matches the type of radiation equipment your facility uses. Your choice of QE may ultimately be based on price, personal rapport, geographic proximity, or other criteria as your facility determines relevant. MRCP does not recommend a specific QE.

Factors that may impact costs of QE services

Costs of QE services depend on what level of service your facility needs, the amount and type of radiation equipment in use at the facility, and the individual QE you choose. The actual price may significantly differ from facility to facility, based on considerations such as:

- Complexity of equipment: There are many types of x-ray equipment, used in a variety of ways. Complexity of equipment can add to the survey time and can increase price.
- Location: If your facility is in a remote area, the QE may charge an additional amount for travel time or mileage. If you do not already have an existing relationship with a QE, you may wish to contact other facilities in your area (such as a local hospital; most of which have used QE services for years) and find out which QE they use. It is possible a QE could inspect several facilities in a rural area on a periodic route or circuit. However, looking into the information several months before your facility's QE due date would assist in making such an arrangement possible.
- Initial survey vs periodic: The first inspection by a QE on a new machine or new room may be more expensive than subsequent surveys, as there are often additional tests that need to be conducted on a new x-ray room.
- Personal pricing model of the individual QE: some QE's specialize in certain geographic regions or on certain types of equipment. And some QE's simply have a lower (or higher) price point than others. It may be in your best interest to seek quotes from more than one QE. Again, finding a QE several months in advance of your QE Due Date is in your best interest.

www.health.mo.gov

Healthy Missourians for life.

The Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services will be the leader in promoting, protecting and partnering for health.

AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY / AFFIRMATIVE ACTION EMPLOYER: Services provided on a nondiscriminatory basis.