



American Academy of Health Physics
American Board of Health Physics

Corner

Address contributions for *CHP News* and "CHP Corner" to:

GARY KEPHART CHP

Work: 217-935-8881 x4211

Fax: 217-935-4279

Email: Gary_Kephart@illinova.com

STEVE RIMA CHP CSP

Work: 970-248-6787

Email: steven.rima@doegjpo.com

Why is the CHP Examination Scheduled on the First Day of the Annual Meeting?

I am curious to find out the reason that the certified health physicist (CHP) exam continues to coincide with the first day of the Annual Health Physics Society (HPS) Meeting each year. I believe it was originally set up to have the availability of CHPs to administer the oral examination used to assess a candidate's knowledge of health physics. But the Examination is no longer given orally by a panel of CHPs. The test is now written, in two parts, and administered at the Annual Meeting and at "Alternate Sites."

In the past two years, I have found myself in a dilemma. The dilemma is in choosing between helping to provide the opportunity for health physics certification and maintaining my own certification. I realize that the Annual Meeting is not the only method for obtaining the required Continuing Education points, but there is more to attending the Annual Meeting than just collecting points.

Several locations around the country are currently designated as "Alternate Testing Sites." These test sites are available to health physicists not attending the Annual Meeting, for whatever reason. They are also proctored by CHPs not attending the meeting, for whatever reason. Since these sites are available, why not just use the alternate site method and change the date of the exam? The pool of CHPs able to proctor the exam would be greatly increased. The number of test sites could increase, making the testing more accessible to the candidates. Both candidates and proctors would be better able to attend the Annual Meeting.

Since I perceive there is no longer a need to have the exam date coincide with the Annual Meeting, I recommend that the Board review the possibility of establishing a separate date for administering the Certification Exams.

This would give the local chapters and regions of the country more access to the CHPs currently required for proctoring the exam. The date could be established days or weeks prior to the Annual Meeting so the candidates and proctors have the opportunity to attend and fully benefit from the Annual Meeting. It would still give the Examination Committee time to meet and discuss the exam. It might also allow the Exam Committee to announce the successful candidates for Part I at the Annual Meeting.

While I believe that this is not the only way to improve the CHP exam process, I do believe that it better serves the membership of the HPS and the American Academy of Health Physics. I believe it is time to review the examination process and update it to meet the current needs of the membership.

I would like to find out what other CHPs think about the examination process and what the Board thinks as well.

John O'Donnell, CHP

ABHP Chair Nancy Kirner Replies:

Your suggestion has considerable merit, especially when/if we go to a totally machine-scored exam. We might be able to eliminate an entire meeting of the Board (the fall meeting) since it is almost entirely spent on exam-related issues. Who knows, we might even be able to announce the results of both Part I and Part II at the Annual HPS Meeting (but that would continue anxiety at the HPS meeting). I suspect that it will take a few years to implement, but I think it is a good direction to go. If we don't adopt a fully machine-scored test, however, I don't think it is logistically possible.

Call for Volunteers

Ellen Hochbeiser is concerned that members—who are no doubt trying to contact her to offer to host a regional Part I question development workshop—are having trouble finding her door so they can beat it down. Her new address is Ellen Hochbeiser, University of Arizona, Radiation Control Office, P.O. Box 245101, 1640 N. Vine, Tucson, AZ 85719; Hochheis@u.arizona.edu; 520-626-7215.

One of the corollaries to Murphy's Law is that the probability of a job/address change increases dramatically immediately after the directory goes to press. (Ellen says this health physics trivia will NOT be a question on Part I.) ■