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federal register

Radiofrequency sealers, heaters, and gluers
hazards; workshop

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF
HEALTH, EDUCATION, AND WELFARE
Public Health Service
Food and Drug Administration
Bureau of Radiological Health
Rockville, Maryland 20857
(HFX-460)

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DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH,
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NOTICE

DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

Food and Drug Administration

48355

[Docket No. 79N-0314]

Radiofrequency Sealers, Heaters, and
Gluers; Open Workshop**AGENCIES:** Food and Drug
Administration; Occupational Safety
and Health Administration.**ACTION:** Notice.**SUMMARY:** The Bureau of Radiological
Health (BRH) of the Food and Drug
Administration (FDA) and the
Occupational Safety and Health
Administration (OSHA) announce an
open workshop to discuss potential
hazards to persons involved in the use
of radiofrequency (RF) sealers, heaters,
and gluers. Techniques for the control or
elimination of hazards from such RF-
emitting devices are also being sought.**DATES:** The workshop will be held
September 12 and 13, 1979, and will
convene at 9 a.m. each day.**ADDRESSES:** The workshop will be held
at the Department of Labor auditorium
New Department of Labor Building,
Second and Constitution Ave. NW.,
Washington, DC 20210.Written supplemental comments to
the Hearing Clerk (HFA-305), Food and
Drug Administration, Rm. 4-65, 5600
Fishers Lane, Rockville, MD 20857.**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:**Zory Glaser, Bureau of Radiological Health
(HFX-460), Food and Drug Administration,
Department of Health, Education, and
Welfare, 5600 Fishers Lane, Rockville, MD
20857, 301-443-3426; orFrank Tipton, OSHA—OHP, Rm. N-3718,
Department of Labor, Second and
Constitution Ave., NW., Washington, DC
20210, 202-523-7174.**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** BRH and
OSHA are concerned about potential
adverse health effects on personnel
exposed to RF energy emitted from RF
sealers, heaters, and gluers. These RF-
emitting devices are also known as: heat
sealers, fusers, molders, fasteners or
embossers; high frequency (HF) sealers
or dryers; electronic or electromagnetic
sealers or welders; and dielectric
heaters. They are generally designed to
operate at a frequency between 3 and
100 megahertz (MHz). Another class of
electromagnetic radiation-emitting
devices which operate at or near these
frequencies include induction heating
equipment.Radiofrequency sealers, heaters, and gluers
hazards; workshop4835548385

The open workshop is being
scheduled to bring together users,
manufacturers, Federal agency staff,
employee representatives, trade
associations, and others concerned with
RF sealers, so that BRH and OSHA may
benefit from their expertise, as well as
to ensure that the present knowledge of
the possible hazards of these devices is
appreciated in the affected industries.
Field measurements have confirmed that
a significant number of personnel are
exposed to high levels of RF radiation
from these devices. Because the RF
energy at these frequencies can
penetrate deeply into the body without
activating the heat sensors located in
the skin, operators of such RF equipment
may be unaware of exposures to the RF
energy.

The workshop will cover topics
important to the assessment and control
of the possible hazards of RF energy
from RF sealers, heaters, and gluers. The
topics to be discussed are expected to
include:

- a. Measurement of electric and
magnetic field intensities generated by
these devices;
- b. A brief review of biological effects
at frequencies between 3 MHz and 100
MHz;
- c. Explanation of the near-field
conditions that are a part of these
exposures, and the difficulty posed
under these conditions in exposure
measurement and in predicting possible
adverse effects to persons so exposed;
- d. A discussion of RF radiation
measurement equipment and
techniques;
- e. Procedures or techniques available
for control of RF emissions;
- f. Possible initiatives of Federal
agencies on the control of RF-emitting
devices;
- g. Technical aspects related to the use
or application of RF heater-type
equipment, and the possible resultant
effects upon intended functions and
unnecessary radiation emission; and
- h. Other topics pertinent to the
discussion of possible health hazards
from RF equipment, particularly RF
heaters, sealers, and gluers.

BRH and OSHA are anxious to gain
information especially from users and
manufacturers of RF sealers, heaters,
and gluers, on the techniques for

Occupational Safety and Health
Administration48385Radiofrequency Sealers, Heaters, and
Gluers; Open Workshop

Cross Reference: For a notice of open
workshop issued by the Food and Drug
Administration and the Occupational
Safety and Health Administration to
discuss potential hazards of using
radiofrequency sealers; heaters, and
gluers, see FR Doc. 79-25278 appearing
in the Notices section of this issue.

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measurement of emissions of such RF
energy assessment of operator exposure
to the RF energy, and the techniques and
procedures for the control or elimination
of stray RF emission from sealers,
heaters, and gluers. Other relevant
information is also solicited.

Several speakers from the involved
agencies are expected to make short
presentations on the above topics.
Opportunity will be provided for
comments and questions by any
interested person. Persons wishing to
present brief prepared statements
should contact Zory Glaser or Frank
Tipton by September 5, 1979.

As time permits, other persons present
will be given the opportunity to make
brief statements. This will be an
informal open workshop, but a
transcript will be made so that the
maximum benefit may be derived from
the workshop. Anyone wishing to
submit written statements or other
information relevant to the subject of
this workshop for inclusion in the
permanent record may do so at the
workshop, or by sending it to the FDA
Hearing Clerk (address above) by
October 12, 1979. Written submissions
should be clearly identified with the
words "BRH-OSHA open workshop on
RF sealers."

Although this workshop is not a
hearing, and is not a part of any formal
rulemaking, all the information and
opinion submitted in preparation for,
during or in response to this workshop
will become a part of a permanent file
for any new or modified rules that may
be issued by either agency concerning
RF heaters, sealers, and gluers.

Dated: August 10, 1979.

William F. Randolph,

Acting Associate Commissioner for
Regulatory Affairs.

[FR Doc. 79-25278 Filed 8-16-79; 8:45 am]

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