

Ideas that Excite
National Radiation Protection Professionals Week
7-13 November 2010

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The National Radiation Protection Professionals Week, 7-13 November 2010, is an opportune time to reach out to your fellow regulators and local community. A great way to do this is to host an open house. Once you've decided who your audience will be, you don't need to look far for great ideas; we've brought some to you that are tried and true.

Living History: Choose two or more historical figures from the chapters of radioactive history. One group used Madame Curie and Albert Einstein. The woman who played Curie was the more serious of the two. She was a geologist who developed a fascination for Curie. Taking it upon herself to pull together a vintage looking outfit, she also created a poster of Curie's history. In the persona of Curie, she walked through the open house drawing a string of interested followers behind her. She led them back to the poster display and explained Curie's role in the science of radiation.

Einstein, on the other hand, was a gregarious guy prone to a good laugh. He was dressed in a lab coat and wore a goofy wild wig. "Einstein" made his way through the crowd carrying lime green gelatin shots, daring attendees to try his latest concoction.

Ask a question; win a door-prize entry: One group found that their scientists were fairly introverted people. So they made conversation easier by challenging every visitor to stop at each of three displays and ask a question. In turn they would get an answer and a ticket to enter into the door prize drawing. The staff manning the displays enjoyed answering questions and found the attendees to be quite interested in their work. Three people each won a gift certificate to a local restaurant.

Demonstrate the equipment: Geiger counters are interesting to look at, but very engaging when you get to use them. Use your electronic measuring devices to not only show how it works, but to explain background radiation and what it comes from. Once people get the hang of it, you can play "Find the Source." Hide a source in some part of a display and see if someone can use your device to find it.

Can't do an open house? Reach out to your local Scouting Council. Boy Scouts can earn a Nuclear Science Merit Badge and Girl Scouts can earn Nuclear Science and Technology Interest Patch. And you can help them!

From a major effort like a lock-in where they earn the entire badge to a less time-consuming effort where you can address one part of the badge requirement, such as careers in the field of nuclear science, you can influence today's youth to consider their future as a Radiation Protection Professional.