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****FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE ****

McLean, VA, January 22, 2009 – What would be your response to a radiological incident? How will your State and the Feds respond? Who would or can take care of us? How do we even know if we are exposed to radiation?

These and other questions will be addressed at the 42nd Midyear Topical Meeting of the Health Physics Society (HPS), which will take place January 31-Feb 3, 2009 in San Antonio, Texas at the Henry B. Gonzales Convention Center. The topic is “Recent Advances in Planning and Response to Radiation Emergencies.” Approximately 400 attendees are expected, with over 110 presentations throughout the three days.

MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

- The role of the Office of Science & Technology Policy in strengthening our national response to radiological emergencies (Sunday a.m. session)
- Radiological response operations by the New York City Fire Department (Sunday a.m. session)
- Guidance for first responders (Tuesday a.m. session)
 - IAEA manual now available for PDA or smart phone
 - Radiation myth busting
 - Choosing the correct course of action
 - Software for rapid internal uptake assessment
 - The role of a community reception center
- Medical response (Sunday p.m. session)
 - Healthcare facility response
 - The role of healthcare facilities in a radiological emergency
 - Medical testing to determine radiation dose level
- The Public Health response (Monday a.m. session)
 - Utilizing the Medical Reserve Corp
 - How Public Health Agencies are preparing
 - The role of Public Health in a radiological emergency
- Advances in radiation detection instrumentation (Monday p.m. session)
 - Credit card radiation dosimeter
 - GPS linkage to ground detectors
 - Real-time mapping of radiological data
 - Mobile labs
 - Identifying enriched uranium
- Federal Agency planning (Tuesday a.m. session)
 - EPA update of the protective action guides (PAGs)
 - DHS/FEMA planning
 - FDA protective action recommendations

Information about these and all of the presentations can be found at <http://hps.org/meetings/>.

ABOUT THE HEALTH PHYSICS SOCIETY

The Health Physics Society consists of approximately 5,500 radiation safety professionals whose activities include ensuring safe and beneficial uses of radiation and radioactive materials, assisting in the development of standards and regulations, and communicating radiation safety information.

The Society is a nonprofit organization formed in 1956. Its primary mission is excellence in the science and practice of radiation safety. The Society has members in approximately 70 countries, and has established nearly 50 chapters and 10 student branches. Visit www.hps.org for more information.

Health physicists promote the practice of radiation safety. They work in occupational environments such as universities, local hospitals, manufacturing, and nuclear power plants as well as in environmental areas such as radioactive waste sites. They are involved in understanding, evaluating, and controlling radiation's potential risks relative to its benefits in applications such as fighting disease, supplying energy, and increasing security.

IF YOU CAN'T ATTEND THE MEETING

The HPS meeting webpage <http://hpschapters.org/2009midyear/program/sessionlist.php3>) contains links to the full technical program. Reporters who would like to attend the meeting or who need assistance contacting the presenters should contact HPS Media Liaison Kelly Classic (media@hps.org).