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LETTER TO THE EDITORS

With regard to the Americium-241 sources (A. K. Singhvi and M. J. Aitken: Americium-241 for Alpha-Irradiations; Ancient TL, No. 3), I have been informed by the North American distributor, Amersham/Searle, that, "In all probability, the cut edges of the strip would leak Americium, as well, the repeated evacuation under vacuum would lead to the spread of Americium, and the contamination of the vacuum chamber and pump". In order to avoid this, Amersham recommends that they "cap the edges by forging a metal foil piece over the edges".

Consequently, I have had our six sources capped by Amersham after they were purchased; the cost was $50. I believe that this was a worthwhile investment, and it seems to me that it would be prudent for future purchasers of these sources to require that they be capped by the manufacturer before shipment.

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INTERLABORATORY CALIBRATION OF RADIOACTIVE SOURCES

The following calibration kit is now available:

A) 1/4 g coarse-grain fluorite powder (MBLE Super S) gamma irradiated to 100 rads,

B) 6 fine-grain fluorite discs beta-irradiated to 100 rads,

C) 6 fine-grain fluorite discs alpha-irradiated to an equivalent beta dose of 100 rads, of known a-value,

D) 12.5 micron aluminium foil for checking alpha source spectra,

E) Smoky-glass filter for taping onto the bottom of the photomultiplier housing so as to reduce the TL intensity to a manageable level.

There will be a nominal charge of £50. We would prefer to issue it free but such an inordinate amount of work has gone into it that we are obliged to cover some of it.

Apply to: Dr. M. J. Aitken, Research Laboratory for Archaeology and the History of Art, 6 Keble Road, Oxford, OX1 3QJ, England.