

The CHP Corner, April 2021

For CHPs, aspiring CHPs, and anyone else on the bell curve.



The American Academy of Health Physics

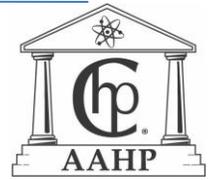
Address contributions to:

Editor – Dan Sowers, CHP

Associate Editor – Michael Zittle, MHP, CHP

Email: dsowers430@gmail.com

Email: mzittle@uw.edu



ARE WE JUST A CLUB?

Scott Schwahn, AAHP President

Are we just a club? OK - spoiler alert. The answer is no. However, I have noticed that the vast majority of Certified Health Physicists (CHPs) are content with passing the exams, paying their maintenance fees, and making sure that they attend enough "extra" activities to maintain their 80 Continuing Education Credits (CECs) every four years. Granted, we're all busy with full-time jobs, and many of us have family and other personal affairs that need attention. (Let's ignore COVID-19 for now, as it has definitely been unusually disruptive.) But it does beg the question... as someone who has gone through the "fire" of the exams and come out successfully, is that all we want? Is that all we should be doing? Aren't we uniquely poised to lead the profession of health physics? A colleague contacted me last week and said that she had noticed a distinct "lack of CHP presence at _____ meetings," and although she didn't suggest or ask why that was the case, it did beg the question about why we are not more engaged as a whole.

On occasion in my career, I have found myself with heartburn as I struggled to comply with a particular regulation. Have you ever tried to change a regulation after it is in place? It isn't easy. The regulations will typically either come from the State or the Federal level, and when they do, for the most part, they are here to stay. Many folks don't realize, though, exactly where they come from. With few exceptions they ultimately come from, or are based on, recommendations from the International Commission on Radiological Protection (ICRP).

I had a good discussion last week with the leadership of the ICRP who told me that very soon,

they will be looking again at revising the "system of radiological protection." That's a broad concept, so think about it this way... remember ICRP Publication 60 "1990 Recommendations of the International Commission on Radiological Protection" and how so many other publications seemed to point to that, to include regulations from the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, U.S. Department of Energy, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, etc. (with apologies to our international CHPs)? Later, many of the same regulations pointed to ICRP Publication 103 "The 2007 Recommendations of the International Commission on Radiological Protection." ICRP Publication 103 was a new system of radiological protection that replaced ICRP Publication 60.

Well, that's happening again and you, my CHP colleague, can be in on the front end of the change. It is so much easier to affect regulation before it ever becomes regulation than it is to change it afterward. So I encourage you to get in on the conversation as it is happening. That's what the [ICRP 2021 6th International Symposium on the System of Radiological Protection](#) in Vancouver is about, taking place 1-4 November this year. This is a big deal, and for most of the readers of CHP Corner, it's right in our backyard! So here's a great chance to get engaged! Get in on the front end. Make a difference in your career and, better yet, make a contribution to the world of radiological protection.

What if CHPs aren't "just" certified? What if our certifications lead the initiatives which change the world?