

ISRI Position on Orphaned Radioactive Sources¹

Position on Radioactive Scrap

The Institute of Scrap Recycling Industries (ISRI) recognizes that radioactive sources pose a health and safety risk to recycling employees, end consumers of scrap, and the general public. While sources are regulated by both state and federal agencies, over the years many have been lost or misplaced (orphaned) and may easily enter the scrap recycling stream. These orphaned sources can come in many forms, including: aircraft parts, military equipment, medical devices, measurement gauges, and other equipment. Some may be easily recognized while others are not.

As such, ISRI promotes the use of screening techniques to identify the presence of radioactive materials, as well as continued coordination with state and federal radiation agencies to ensure that identified material can be safely returned to its point of origin for proper management. Effective screening techniques vary, but may include a combination of visual inspection, portal radiation detectors, area monitors, and/or handheld radiation detection of equipment.

In addition, ISRI recognizes that the rule and regulations governing the handling of orphaned radioactive sources may change over time. ISRI seeks to promote open dialogue with state and federal agencies. This dialogue is meant to facilitate the design and implementation of rules and regulations that do not put undue burdens on recycling companies who come into possession of orphaned radioactive sources in the course of business.

ISRI also supports the development of a federal program to accept and properly manage orphaned sources at no charge to the scrap companies who are providing a public service by identifying these sources.

¹ As adopted by the ISRI Board of Directors on November 8, 2017.