



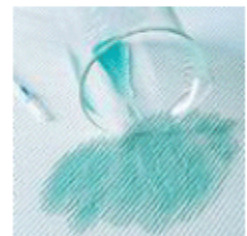
Radiation Survey Problems and Solutions

- While surveying, the survey meter needle behaves erratically or is unstable.
Solution: There could be an electric short in the cable connecting the survey meter to the probe. Try replacing the cable with one from a working meter. If the cable is broken order one from a radiation supply vendor.



- The needle is pinned all the way to the right as you are surveying your work area.
Solution: Assuming the meter is in a radiation field, the scale setting needs to be adjusted by turning the scale knob to a larger multiplier factor. If the meter is already set on the highest scale this may indicate:

1. The meter is in a high radiation field or radiation use area. If the meter is still pinned the probe may be contaminated.
2. High contamination or radioactive material is present. If contamination is suspected, treat as a spill and follow spill handling procedures. If for an isolated and contained source (e.g. waste container, stock vial, etc.), move the probe away from the suspected radiation source as this should reduce the reading and allow for a measurement.
3. Continuous or rapid beep. Move the probe away from the suspected source to see if signal changes.



- The needle on the survey meter will not move at all.
Solution: Check the battery cover and make sure it is closed securely. If problem persists, check your battery power level. Turn the knob on your survey meter to the "BAT" setting. If the survey meter dial is below the "BAT TEST" mark, change the survey meter's batteries.



- The survey meter is reading a much higher background than expected.
Solution: The probe's window might be contaminated. Gently wipe the window with a Kim-wipe and check background again. In addition, ensure that you are taking a background reading in a low-background area, an area away from known/suspected radiation sources.



Common Questions:

- What kind of survey meter should I get?

Answer: Click on this link to choose a meter and probe appropriate to the radioactive material(s) you are using. For contact info regarding companies and websites to purchase such equipment click here.

- What should I do when my survey meter is malfunctioning?

Answer: Check that the batteries and cable are in good condition. If the meter is still malfunctioning, seek out a vendor which offers repair, replacement of equipment. Click here for a list of recommended sites.

- What detector or probe I should use to monitor for radioactive contamination?

Answer: Refer to our [radiation survey meter and probe choice guidance](#).

- Does my survey meter need calibration?

Answer: Check the date on the side of your survey meter marked "Cal. Date". This is the date of the survey meter's last calibration. The meter must be calibrated one year after the listed date.



- Where do I get my survey meter calibrated?

Answer: Survey meter calibrations occur regularly for all institutions. The dates of these calibrations vary. You should consult the calibration schedule for your institution for the next calibration time. If these are not available, please call the Radiation Protection Office for the necessary information.