Detection of Highly Enriched Uranium Using a Pulsed IEC Fusion Device

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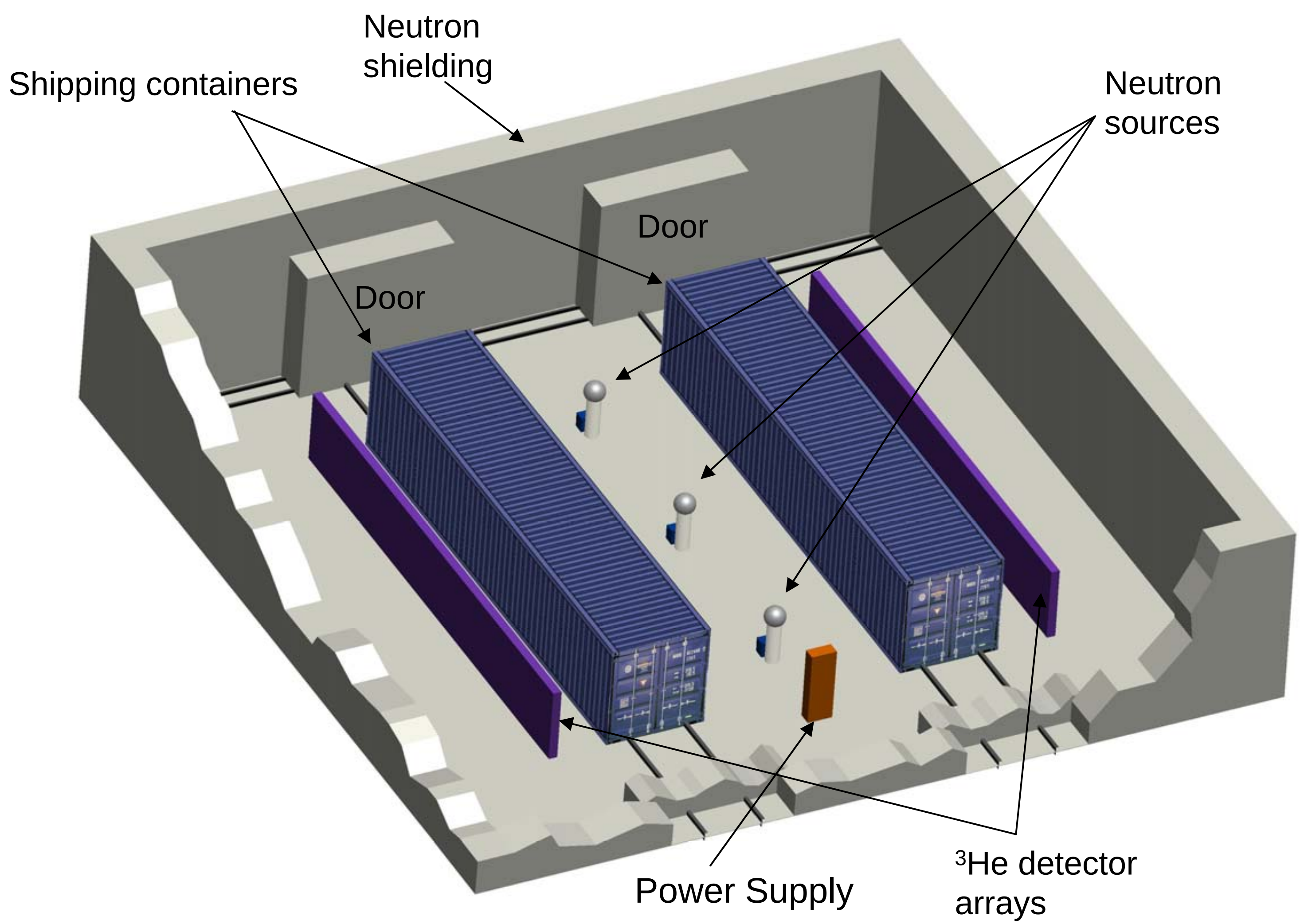
Outline

- Motivation for pulsed IEC research
- Description of HEU detection method
- Progress of pulsed IEC development
- HEU detection results
- Conclusions

Motivation for Pulsed IEC-based Fissile Material Detection Research

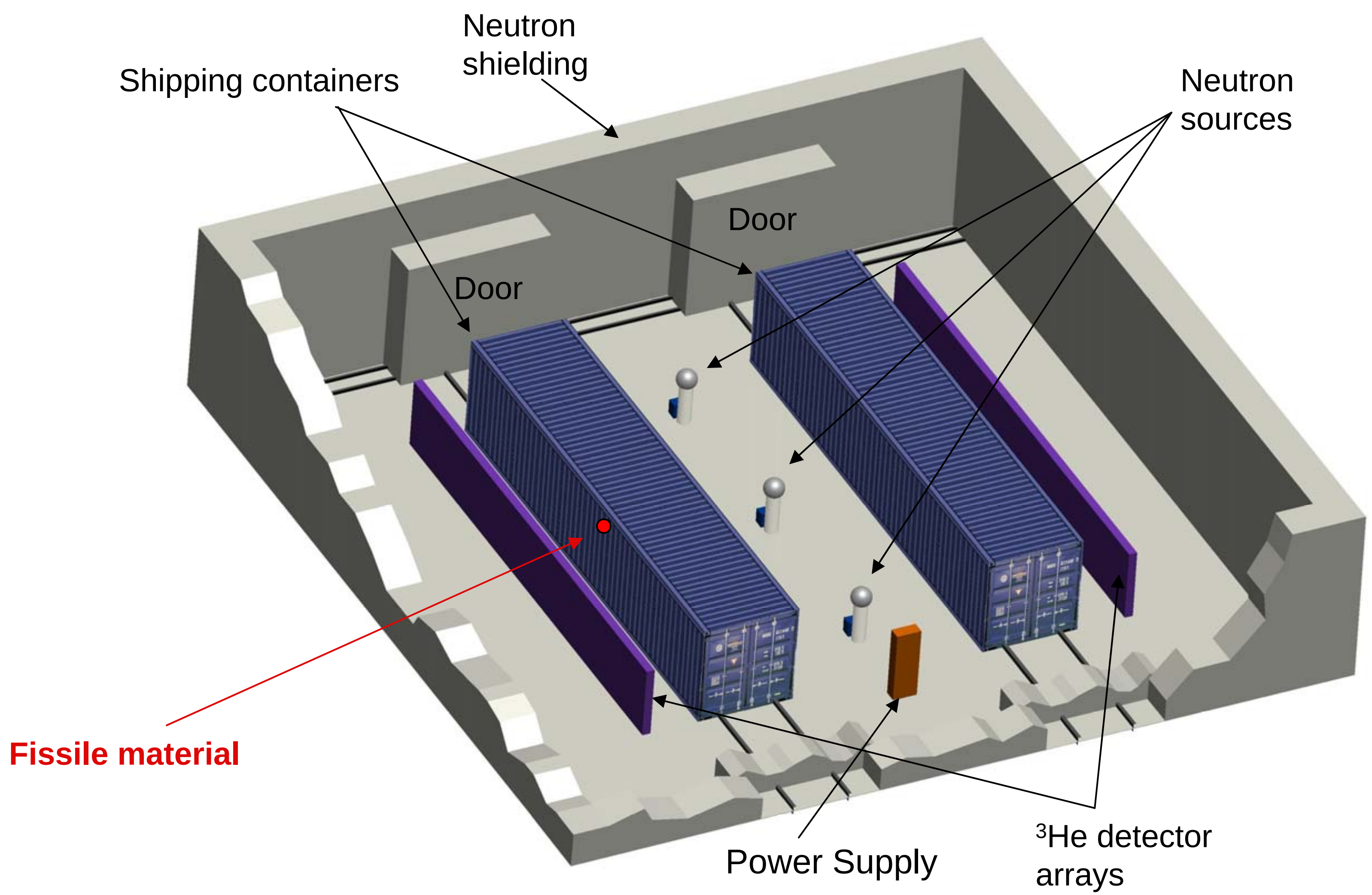
- There have been at least 150 incidents of nuclear smuggling in past decade, half involving special nuclear material (IAEA)
- As little as 16 kg of HEU or 6 kg of Pu can be used to produce a 20 kiloton weapon, even with low technology levels
- Developing technology for the detection of HEU has become a priority for the US Department of Homeland Security
- IEC technology can provide high fluxes of D-D or D-T neutrons for long lifetimes

IEC Fusion-Based HEU Detection Concept



Source: Greg Sviatoslavsky

IEC Fusion-Based HEU Detection Concept



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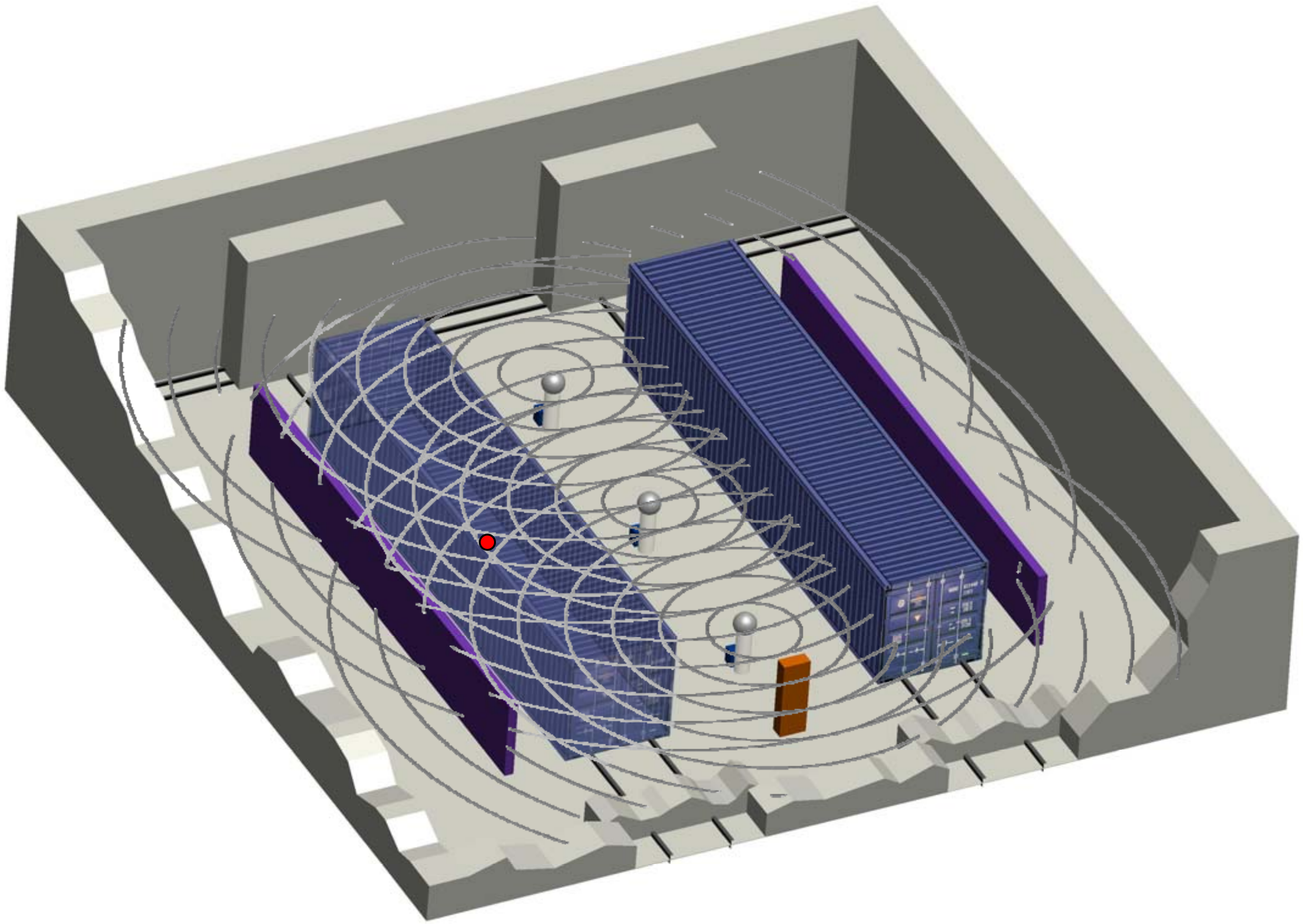
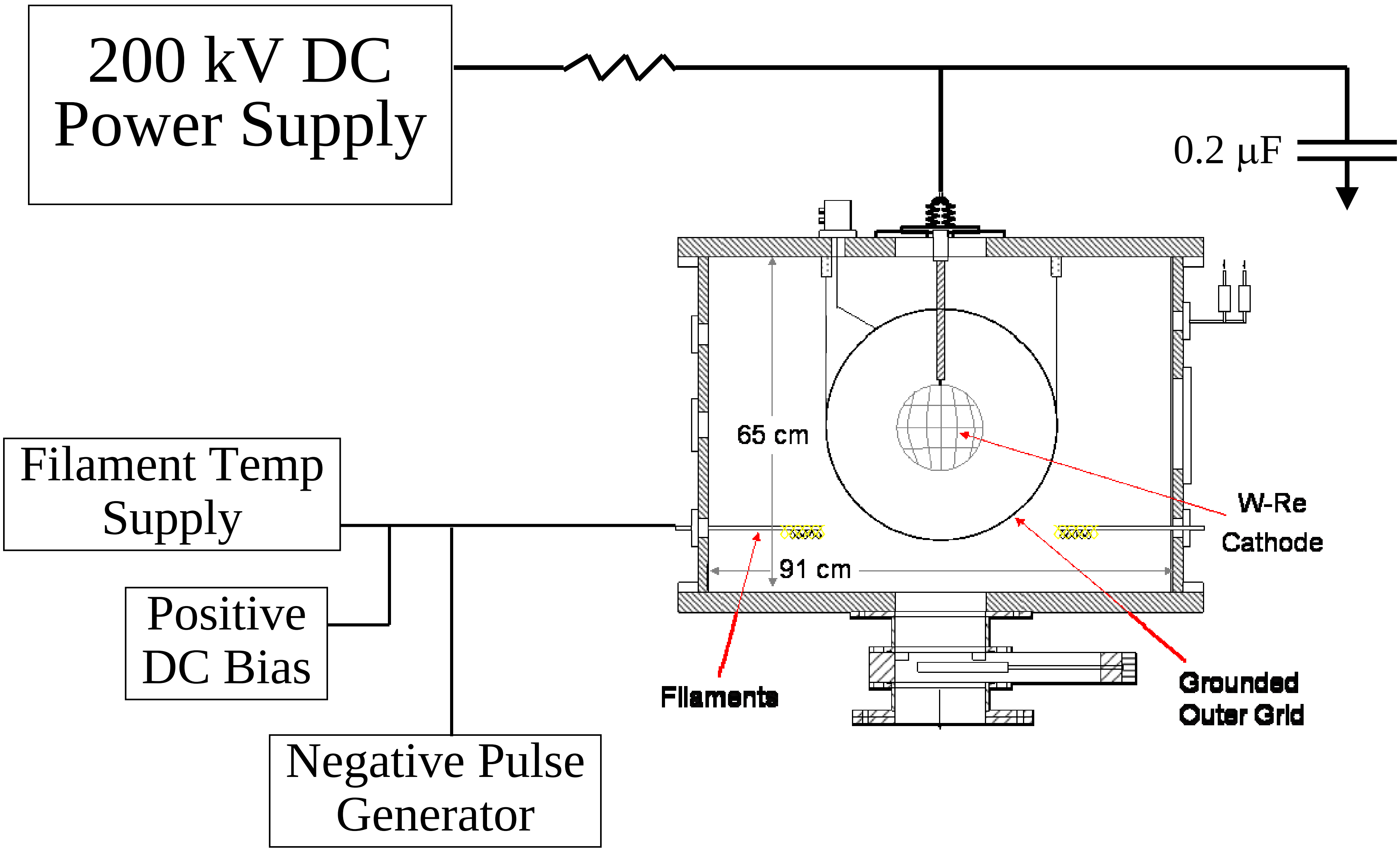
Pulsed Fusion Neutrons Induce Fissions within the Shipping Container

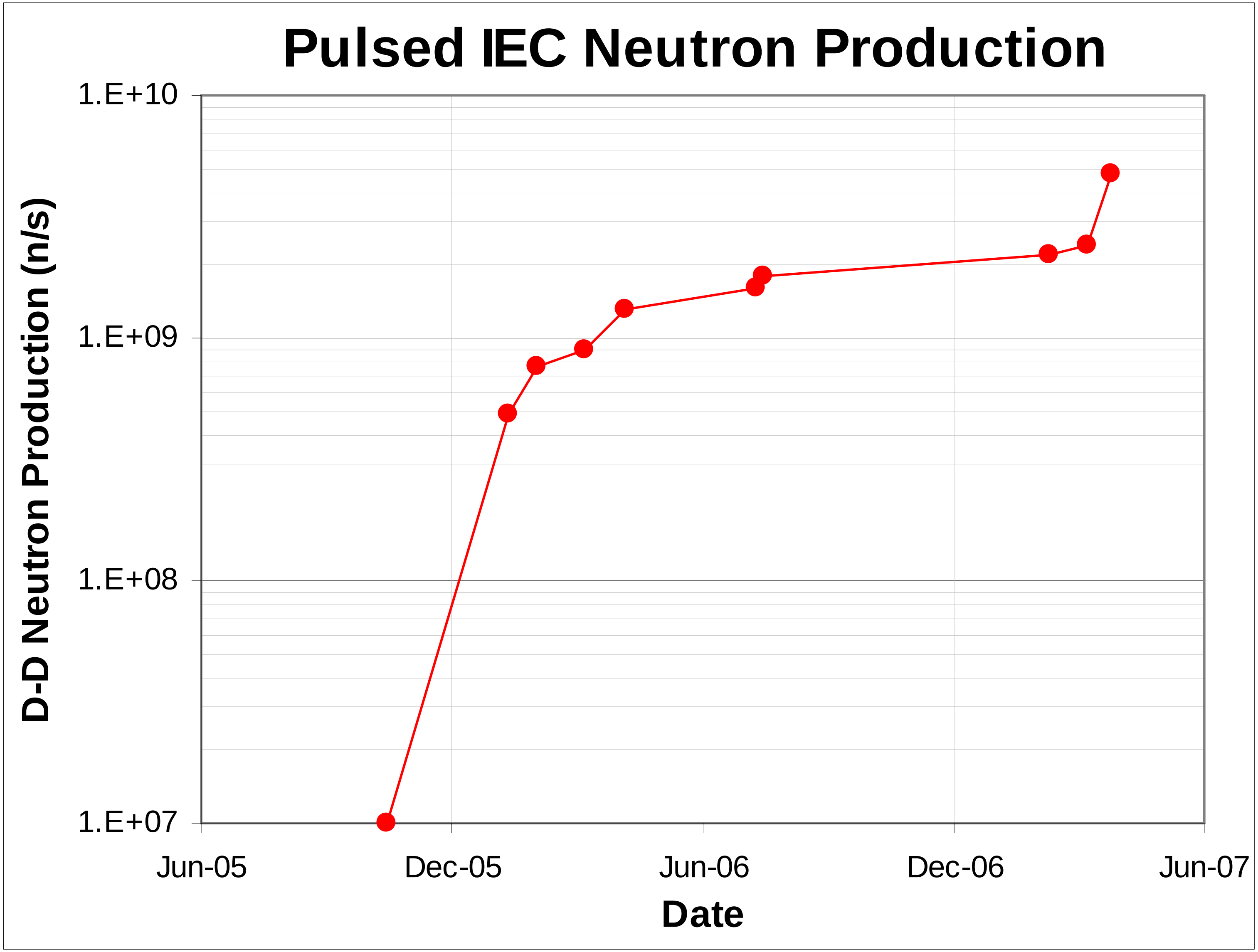


Source: Greg Sviatoslavsky

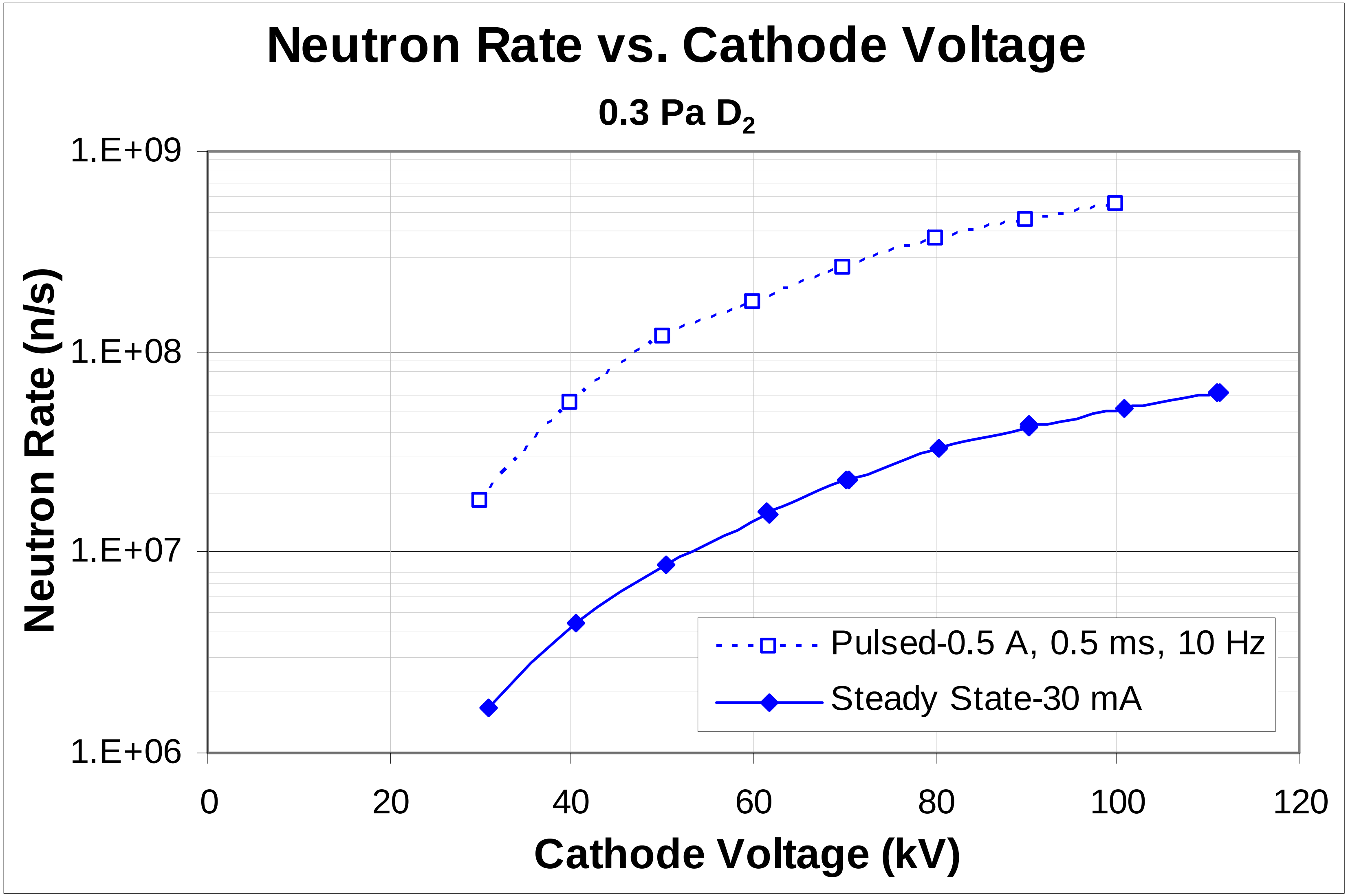
Wisconsin Design Uses Ion Source to Generate Pulses



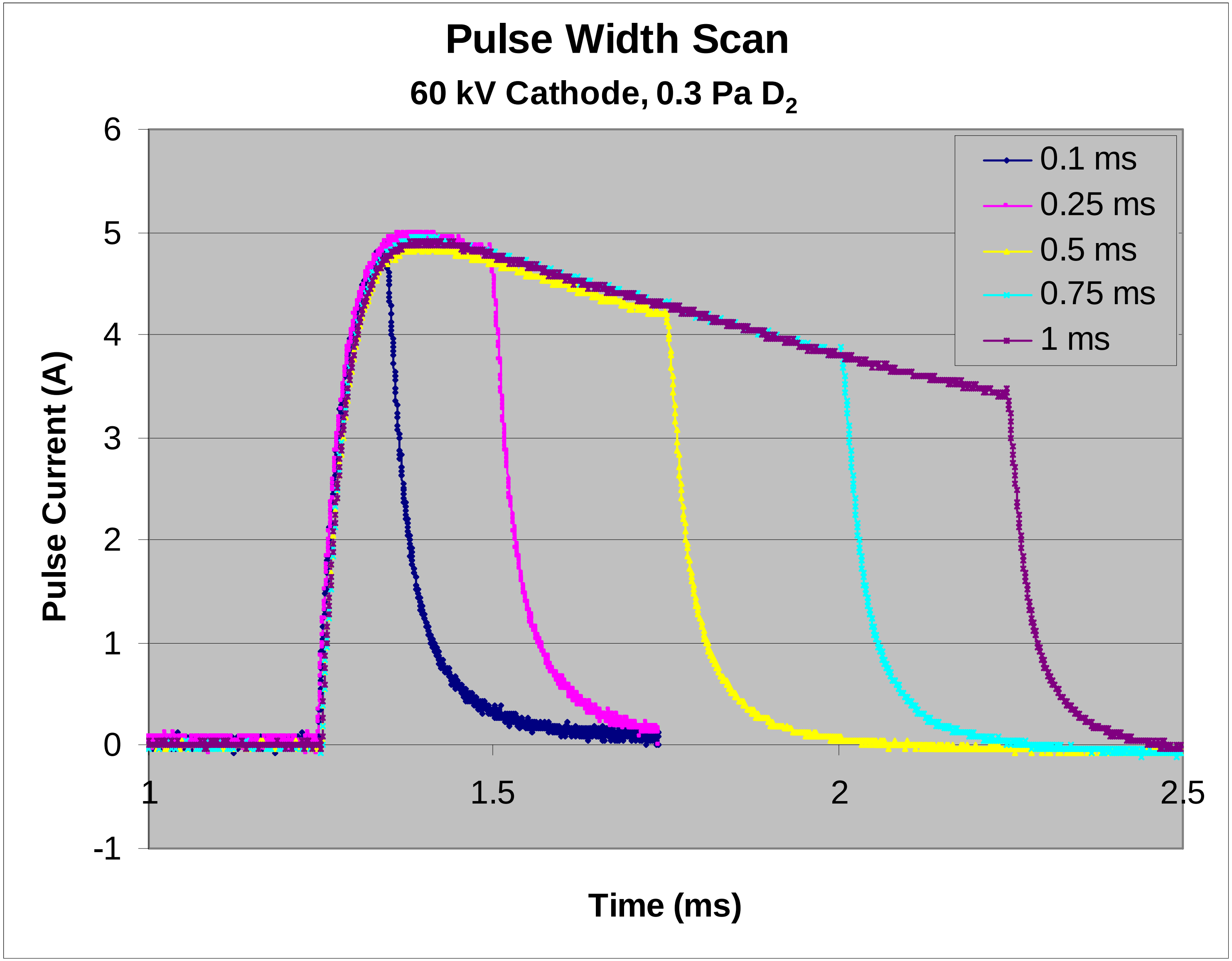
Significant Progress has been Made Over the Past Two Years



Fusion Cross-Sections Increase with Increased Ion Energy



Shorter Pulse Widths Generate Higher Intensity Pulses



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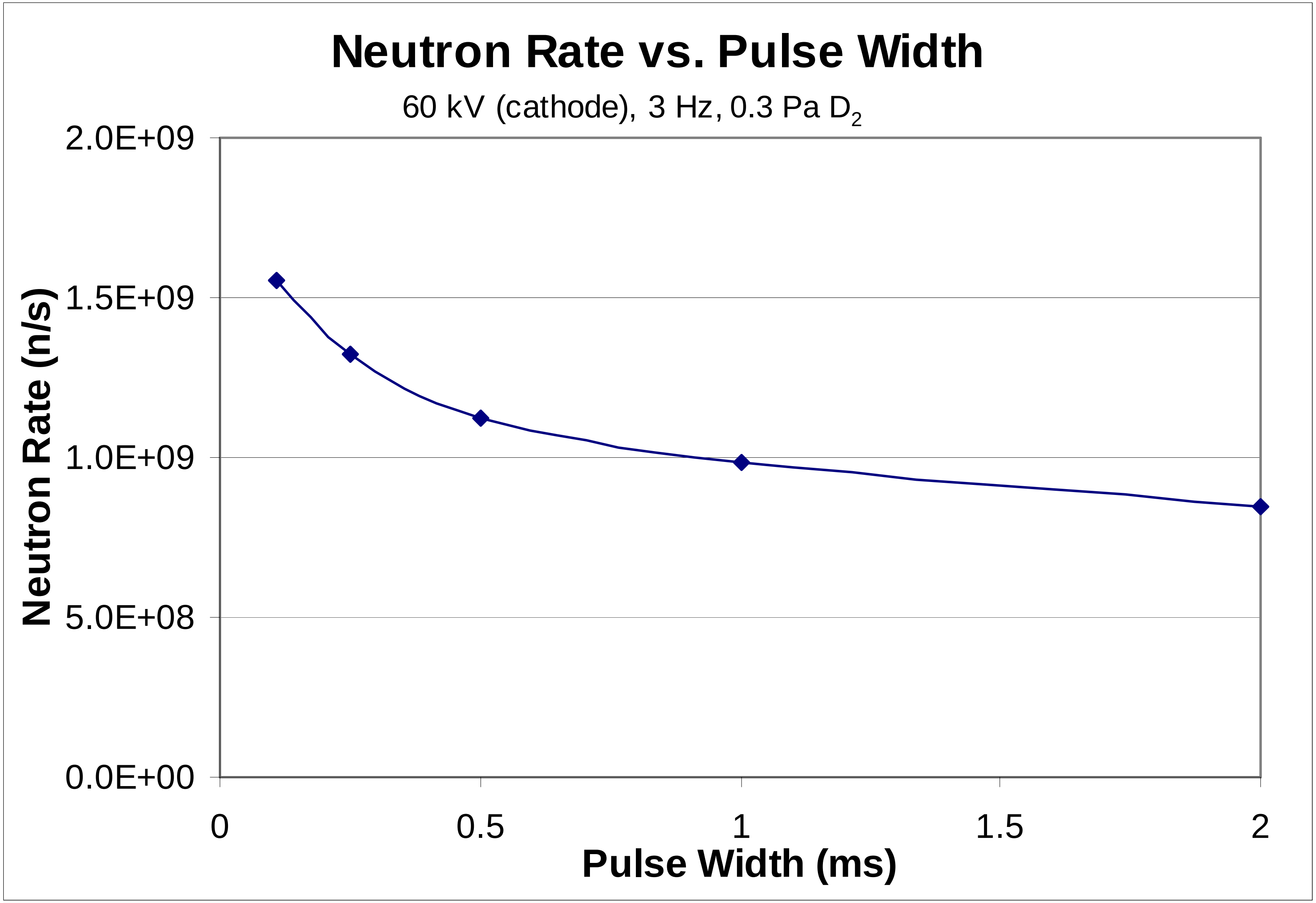
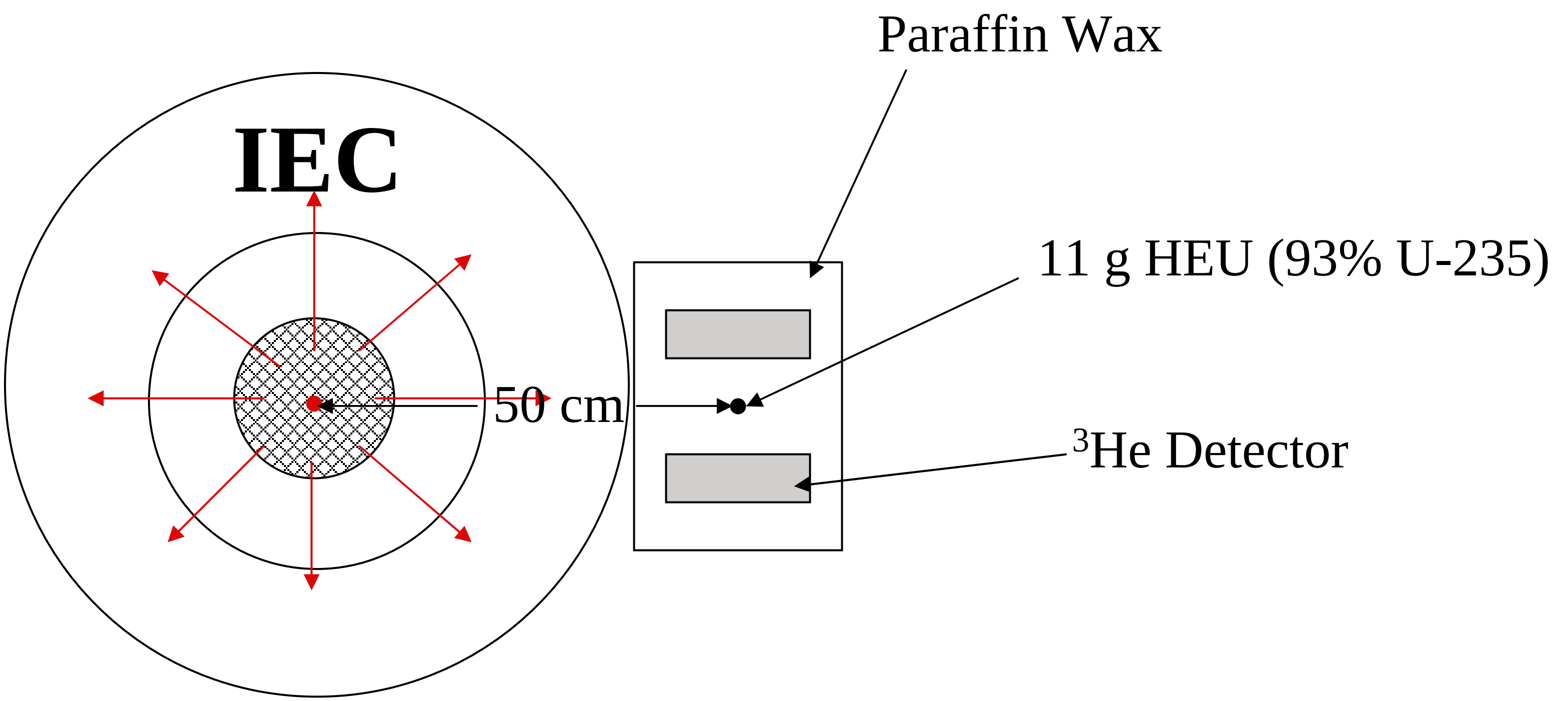


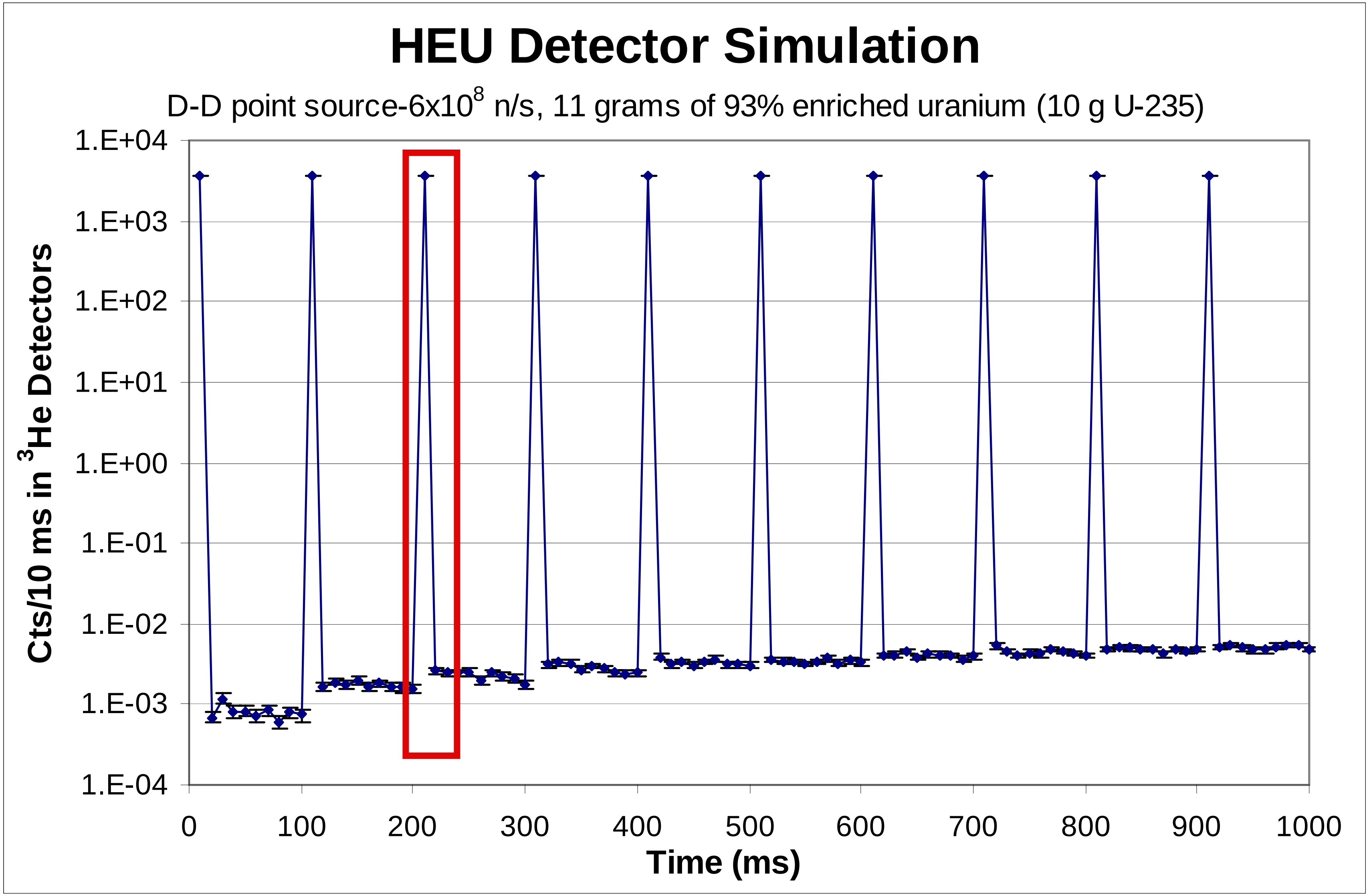
Pulsed IEC Capability Has Reached Levels Sufficient for Near-Term Application Research

- Max Cathode Voltage: 120 kV
- Max Pulse Current:
  - Deuterium: 6 Amps
- Max D-D Neutron Rate: 4.7×10^{9} n/s
  - (96 kV , 5 A, 0.33 Pa)
  - (110μs pulse width, 5 Hz)

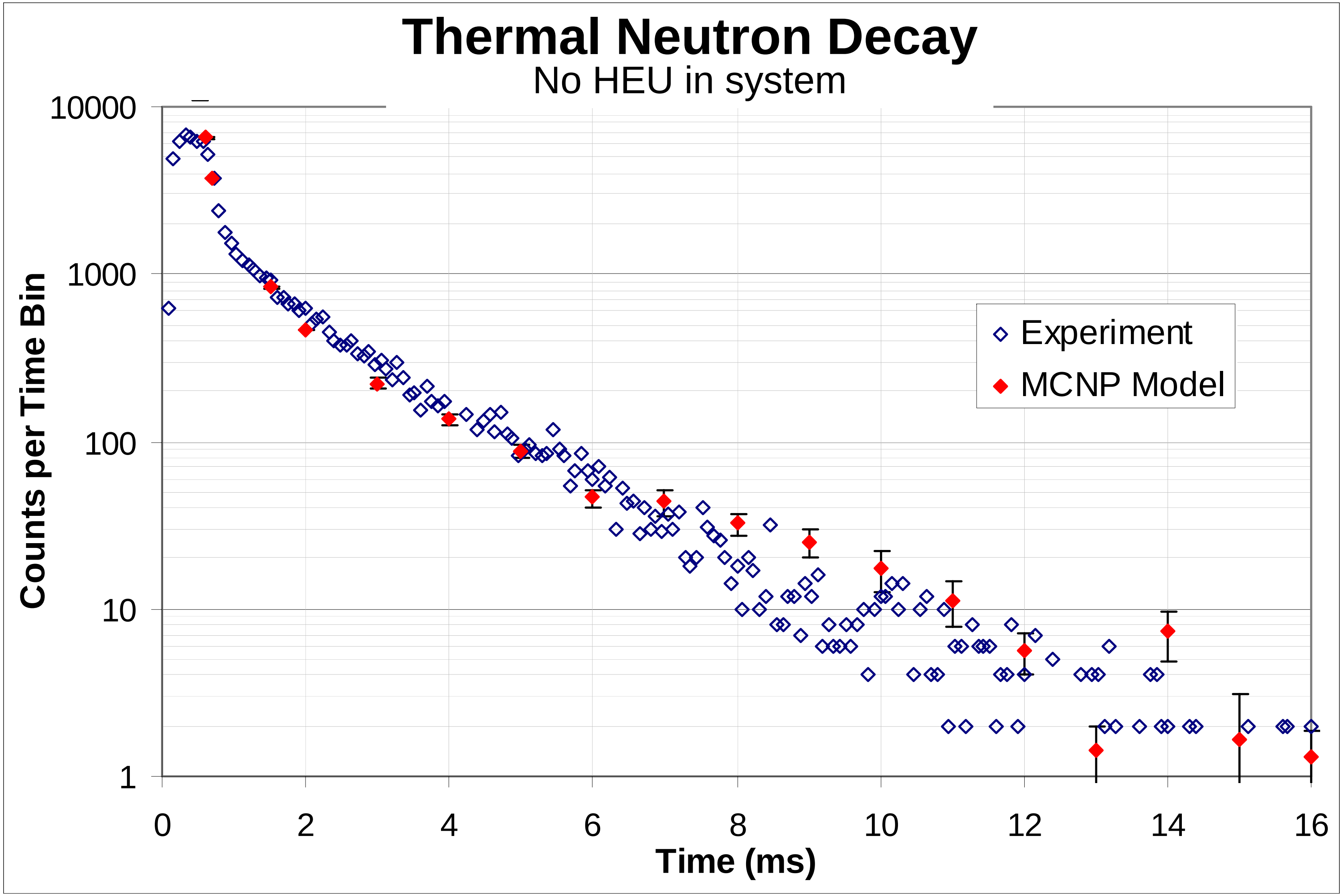
MCNP Model Accurately Predicts Time-Dependent Neutron Behavior



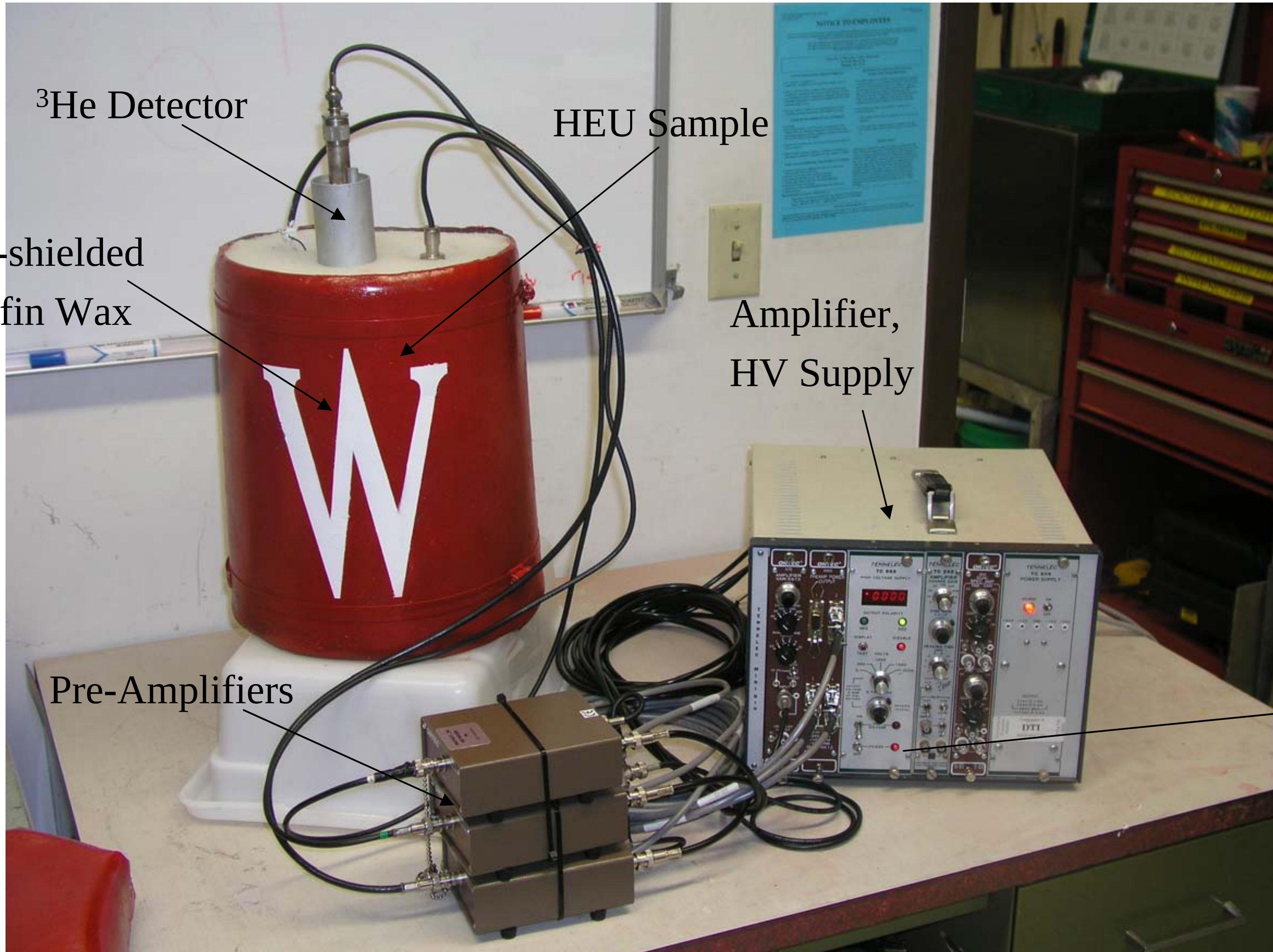
MCNP Model Accurately Predicts Time-Dependent Neutron Behavior



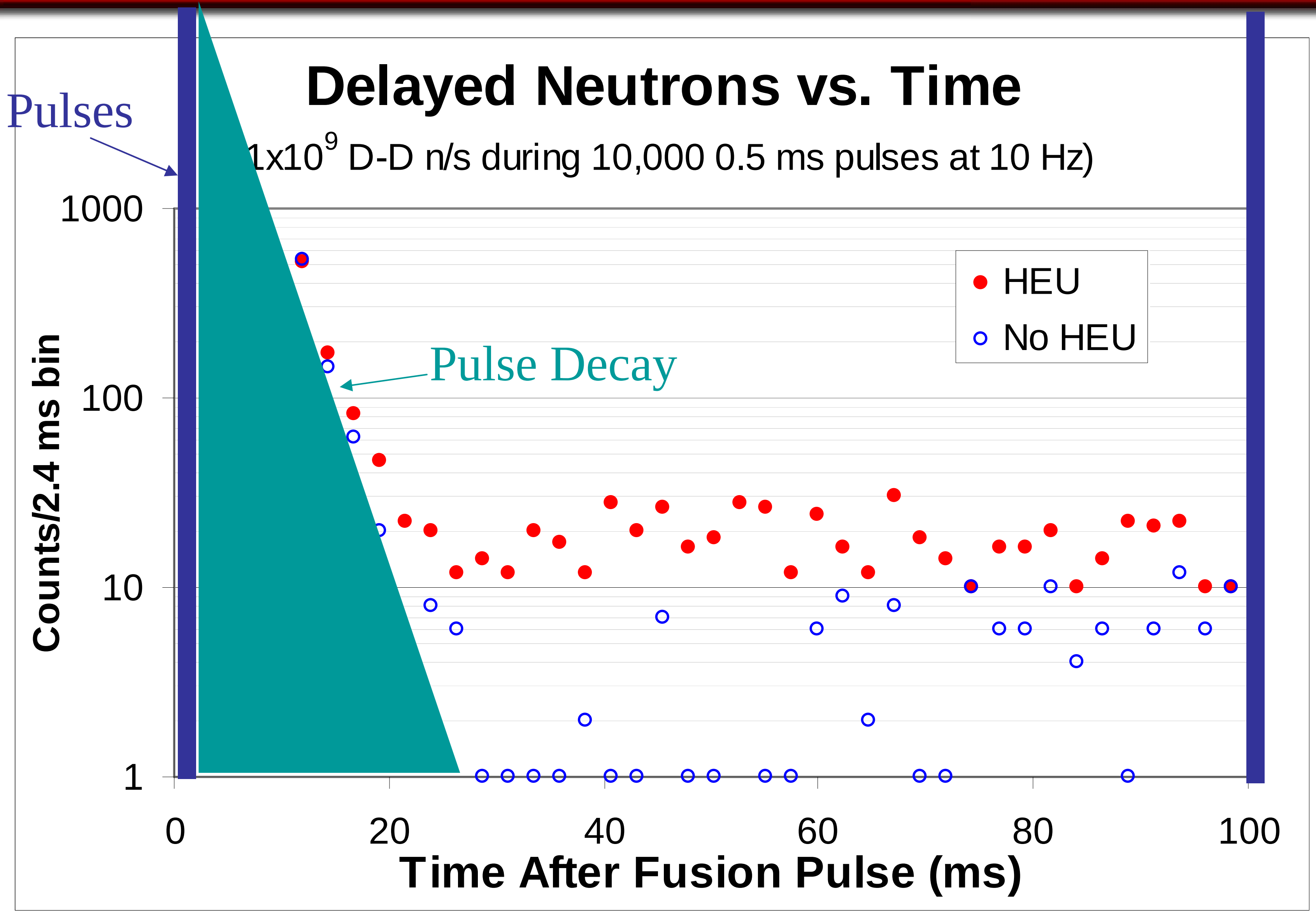
MCNP Model Accurately Predicts Time-Dependant Neutron Behavior



Neutron Detector Construction
Optimized Delayed Neutron Detection

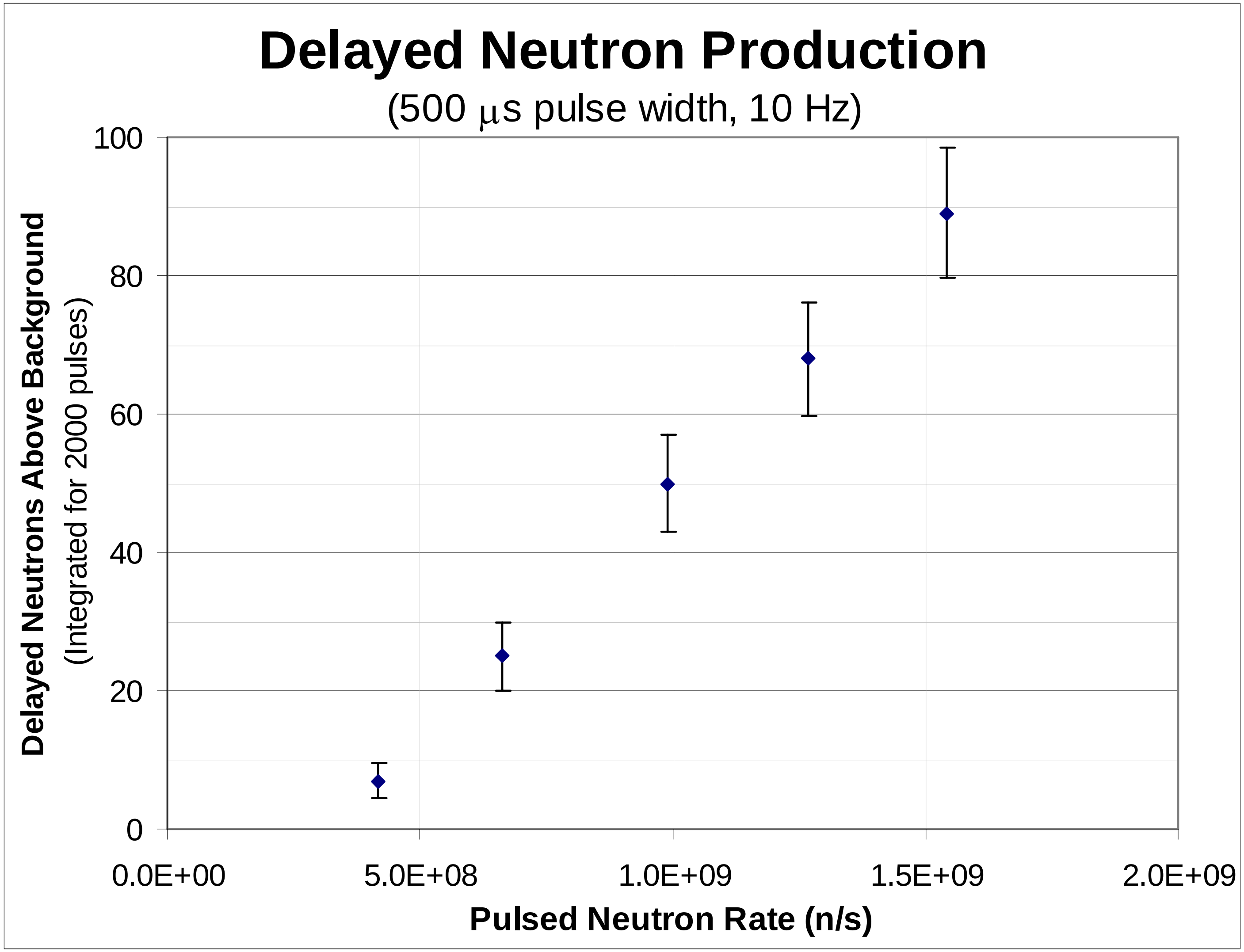


Pulsed IEC Device has Generated Detectable Levels of Delayed Fission Neutrons



Delayed Neutron Production Scaled Linearly with Fusion Neutron Rate

- HEU 50 cm from IEC center
- Detectors ~10 cm from HEU



Conclusions

- Numerous improvements were made to the pulsed IEC device:
  - Pulsing circuitry was operated at voltages up to 120 kV
  - Pulsed D^+ currents in excess of 6 Amperes were achieved
  - Pulse width studies revealed increased neutron production at shorter pulse widths

- Pulsed neutron production rates as high as 4.7×10^9 n/s were generated during 110 μs pulses at 5 Hz.

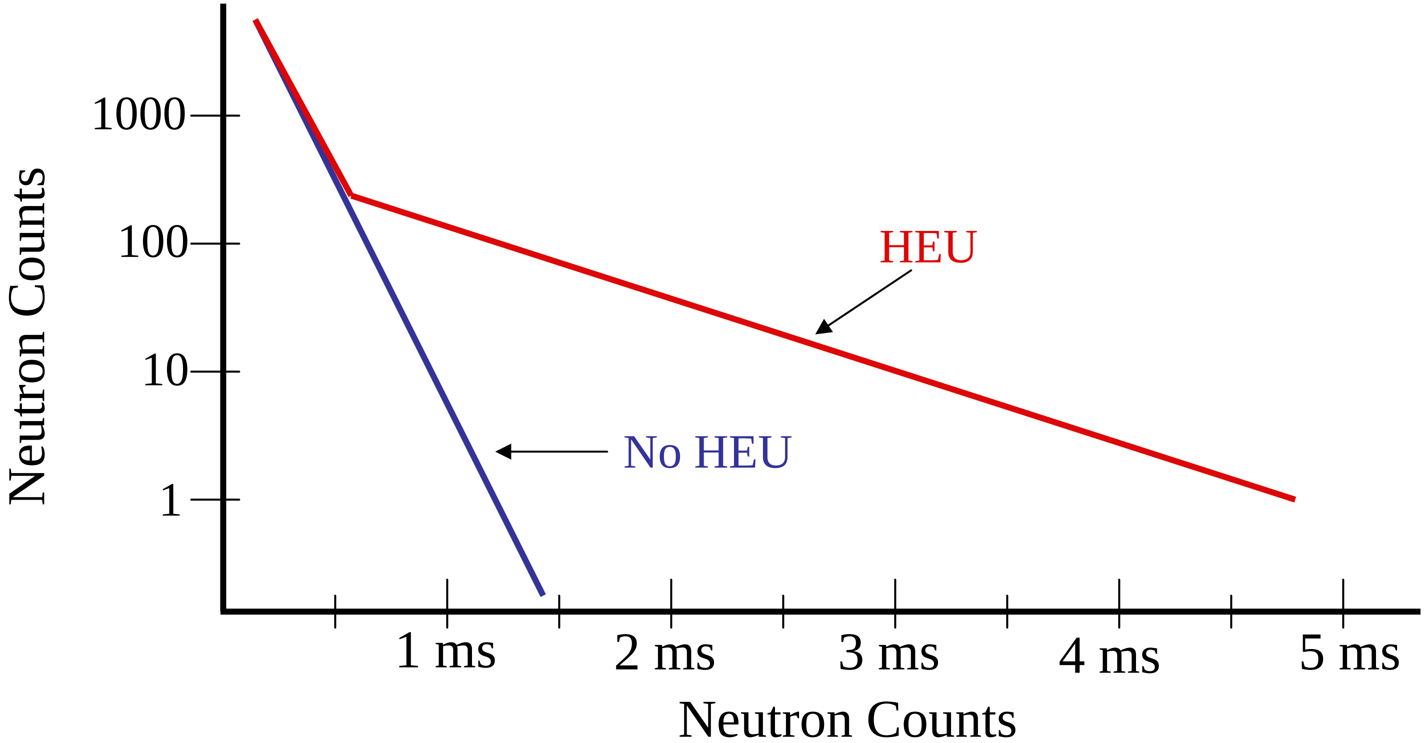
Conclusions (cont.)

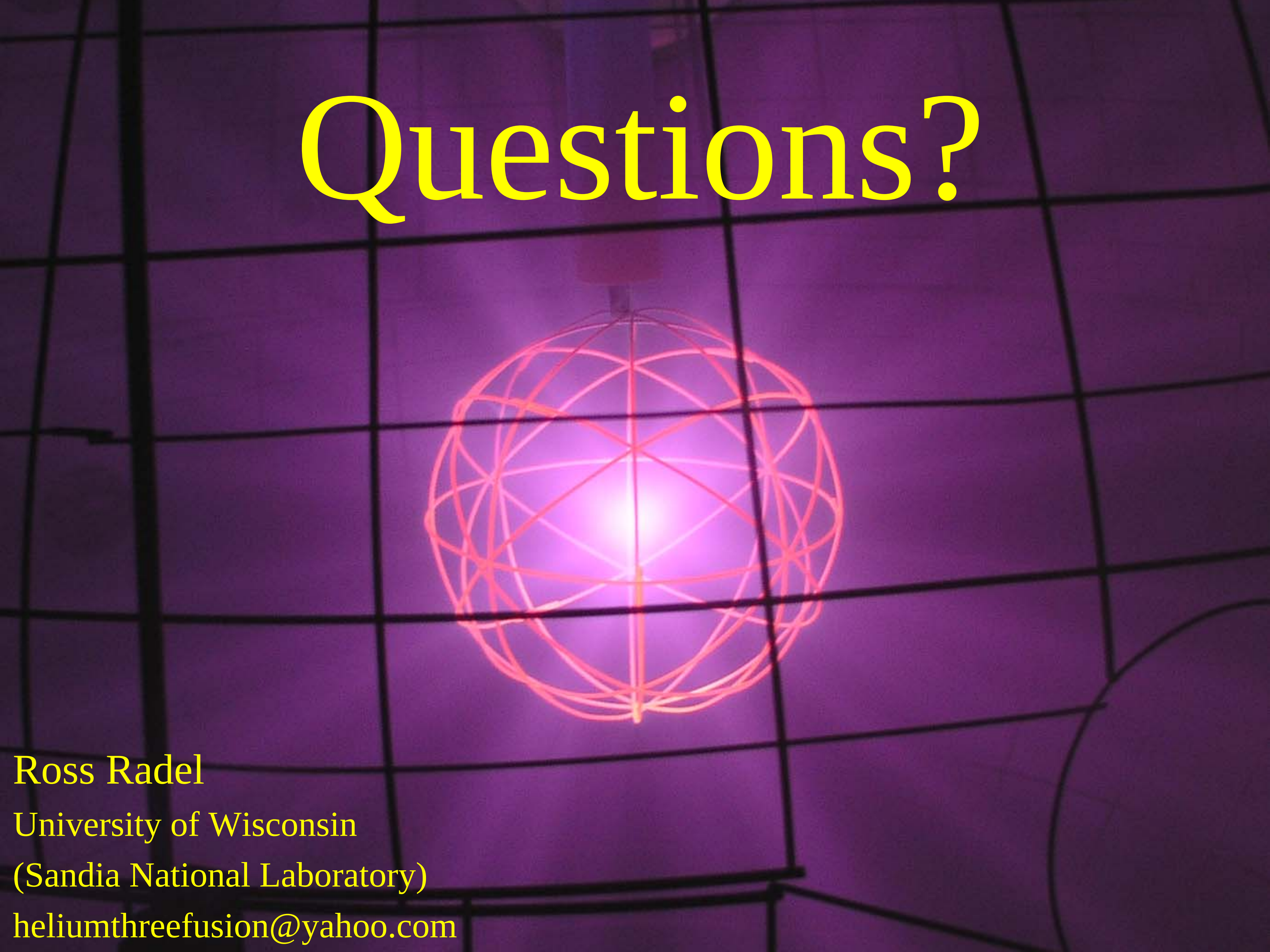
- An MCNP model was developed that accurately models the time-dependent behavior of pulsed IEC neutron production and the associated HEU detection hardware.
  - This model was able to predict the number of delayed neutron counts collected in the ^{3}He detectors to within approximately ±10%.
- *Pulsed* D-D neutron production rates as low as 4×10^{8} n/s generated in the UW-IEC were used to detect the presence of a 10 gram sample of uranium-235.
  - Delayed neutron production was found to increase linearly with fusion neutron rates.
  - Signal-to-noise ratios as high as 6.2 were found to exist when 65 kV remained on the cathode between fusion pulses.

Recommendations for Future Work

- Expand HEU detection study to look at effects of geometry and shielding

- Investigate Differential Die-Away technique





Questions?

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