Quantum dots microstructured optical fiber for x-ray detection

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Why incorporate Quantum Dots in a fiber to detect x-rays?

- Potential NDE applications
- Quantum dots offers a range of designer materials which are easily incorporated into microstructured optical fiber
- Directionality of detector may have other x-ray system uses
- Technology in fiber optic sensors and x-ray detection advancement
- Increased quantum dots output from fiber optics
Fiber microstructured geometry: quartz structure with inclusions
Detectors Used for X-rays

• Scintillator Type
  – Organic (used in plastic, liquid filled, etc.)
  – Inorganic (standard: NaI(Tl) crystal, new: quantum dots)

• Semiconductor Type
  – Silicon (low energy <20keV)
  – CdTe (100% efficient >10keV and < 50keV)

• Quantum dot scintillating fibers are compared to a commercial CdTe detector.
Scintillators

- Atomic energy change from x-rays releases visible photons from scintillator material.
- Photons are captured in waveguide structure and directed to a detector.
- NaI(Tl) and CsI(Tl) are the most common standard inorganic scintillators for x-ray detection but must be grown, typically from vapor deposition or the melt.
- Quantum dots, comprised of ZnS(MgS), is a new scintillating material used in the fiber.
Fluorescence and scintillation emission

• UV fluorescence gives the same scintillation emission as x-rays: this allows evaluating some fiber characteristics using UV.
• The quantum dots fluoresce using UV and can be analyzed using spectrophotometry.
• The ZnS(MgS) quantum dots yield a 580-610 nm peak emission from UV (385 nm) and x-rays.
Quantum Dots Excitation-Emission Spectra

Wavelength (nm)

Intensity (au)

Excitation @585 nm

Emission @385 nm
Fiber preparation

• Inclusions hold quantum dots (QD).
• QDs are placed in fiber via capillary action.
• Fiber optic waveguide uses total internal reflection and scattering to carry scintillation light from QDs through quartz.
Quantum dot fiber emission from UV (365 nm) excitation

Image showing end emission from UV excitation of quantum dots in MOF

500x image of MOF showing quantum dots deposited along longitudinal axis of the fiber
Quantum dot fiber emission in MOF from UV (365 nm) excitation

Illumination of MOF with quantum dots with the fiber oriented vertically for viewing through a microscope

End view of MOF with quantum dots at 500x showing the transmission of 590 nm light at the end of the fiber
Measurement Setup: x-ray tube

- X-ray tube characterization
  - CdTe MCA detector with 100μm collimator
  - Be window, evacuated, Peltier cooled
  - Collimator placed 5mm from tube end
X-ray (Ag anode) tube characterization
Measurement Setup: quantum dots in microstructured optical fiber

- Microstructured fibers photon counting
  - Fiber output to photon counting module (PCM) and counter
  - PCM $\eta_e \approx 65\%$ @ 585 nm
  - Fiber placed 5mm from tube end
Quantum dot measured efficiency in microstructured optical fiber vs. Tube voltage
Results

• Quantum dots in MOF show efficiencies between 5-6%.
• Quantum dot efficiencies are non-linear.
• CdTe detector is considered 100% efficient for counting x-ray photons in the energy range used.
Considerations

• Photon counting module used to measure Quantum dots efficiency is ~ 65% efficient.
• Quantum dots fill 2.5 cm of the microstructured fiber 12 cm length; fiber length is associated with collimator length for CdTe detector.
• Fiber preparation uses capillary action to draw quantum dots in toluene into fiber.
Conclusions

• The Quantum dots Microstructured optical fiber containing ZS(MnS) quantum dots can be used to detect x-rays at 5-6% efficiency.

• A specific fiber length is required for comparing fiber output to the CdTe detector.

• Other inorganic scintillator quantum dots could be similarly substituted and evaluated for relative efficiency.
Questions?