

**QM** An electrically charged particle of mass  $m$  is in its ground state inside the harmonic oscillator well

$$U(x) = \frac{1}{2}m\omega^2x^2.$$

The corresponding harmonic-oscillator eigenfunctions are

$$\psi_n(x) = \left(\frac{m\omega}{\hbar\pi}\right)^{1/4} \frac{1}{\sqrt{2^n n!}} e^{-\frac{m\omega}{2\hbar}x^2} H_n\left(x\sqrt{\frac{m\omega}{\hbar}}\right),$$

where  $n = 0, 1, 2, \dots$ ,  $H_0 = 1$ , and

$$H_n(\xi) = (-1)^n e^{\xi^2} \frac{d^n}{d\xi^n} e^{-\xi^2}.$$

Suddenly a homogeneous electric field is turned on so the potential energy becomes

$$U_{\text{new}}(x) = \frac{1}{2}m\omega^2x^2 - Fx.$$

- What are the new eigenfunctions and energy levels in the new potential?
- What is the wave function immediately after the field is turned on?
- Show that the probability that we end up in the new  $k$ -th excited state is of the form

$$P_k = \frac{A^k}{k!} e^{-A},$$

where the parameter  $A$  is a function of  $F$ ,  $m$ ,  $\omega$ ,  $\hbar$  that you should find. Does the sum of these probabilities add up to 1? If not, why not?

- Write the average  $k$ -value as a function of  $F$ ,  $m$ ,  $\omega$  and  $\hbar$ . For small values of  $F$ , write approximate expressions for both the average  $k$  value and the probability that  $k = 0$ . Be sure to specify what you mean by small  $F$ .

Some useful equations:

$$\int_{-\infty}^{\infty} e^{-x^2+2xx_0} dx = \sqrt{\pi} e^{x_0^2/4}$$

$$e^y = \sum_{k=0}^{\infty} \frac{y^k}{k!}$$

$$ye^y = \sum_{k=0}^{\infty} k \frac{y^k}{k!}.$$