

DCS No.: 99990001030818

Date: August 19, 2003

PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION OF EVENT OR UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE PNO-I-03-025

This preliminary notification constitutes EARLY notice of events of POSSIBLE safety or public interest significance. The information is as initially received without verification or evaluation, and is basically all that is known by the Region I staff on this date.

Facility

Broadway Elementary School
Broadway & Clinton Streets
Camden, New Jersey 08103

Docket No.: 99990001

License No.: General License (10 CFR 31.5)

Licensee Emergency Classification

Notification of Unusual Event

Alert

Site Area Emergency

General Emergency

Not Applicable

SUBJECT: BROKEN TRITIUM EXIT SIGN IN CAMDEN, NEW JERSEY SCHOOL BUILDING

On the morning of August 18, 2003, Region I was informed by the State of New Jersey that an electrical contractor called them to report a broken tritium EXIT sign in a basement area at the Broadway Elementary School in Camden, New Jersey. The EXIT sign was originally distributed by Isolite Corporation in September 2000, and contained 7.5 curies of tritium at the time of manufacture. School and contractor representatives were unsure when the sign was broken. Only one tube containing tritium was damaged. School representatives removed the broken sign from the wall and contained it in a black plastic bag.

NRC Region I and State of New Jersey health physicists responded to the school to discuss the actions to be taken by the school for proper disposal of the damaged sign. NRC and State representatives also collected wipe samples to have analyzed for contamination of the wall and floor in the area where the sign was located. Results of the sample analyses are not yet available. State of New Jersey representatives inserted the bagged sign into two additional clear plastic bags and sealed the outermost bag with tape. School representatives were instructed to keep the bagged EXIT sign in a secure location, and not to open the bags. A representative of the Camden school district confirmed that the sign would be secured, and that they would dispose of the sign as radioactive waste if it cannot be returned to the manufacturer.

The State of New Jersey was notified of the broken EXIT sign. RI is prepared to respond to media inquiries. This information is current as of 3:30 p.m. on August 18, 2003.

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Region I Form 83
(Rev. July 2, 2003)