

May 6, 2004

This Event is not for public disclosure per Agreement State request until 5/10/04

PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION OF EVENT OR UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE -- PNO-III-04-006

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 III staff on this date.

Facility

The Timken Company
Canton, Ohio
License: OH-31201770025
(Agreement State licensee)

Licensee Emergency Classification

Notification of Unusual Event
 Alert
 Site Area Emergency
 General Emergency
 Not Applicable

SUBJECT: MELTED CESIUM-137 SOURCE AT STEEL MANUFACTURING PLANT

DESCRIPTION:

On May 5, 2004, the Ohio Department of Health (ODH) notified the NRC Operations Center of a melted cesium-137 source at The Timken Company manufacturing plant in Canton, Ohio.

The licensee was alerted to a contamination problem on May 3, 2004, when radiation alarms identified radioactive material in a load of baghouse dust from a plant furnace, which was being sent offsite as hazardous waste. The load is now secured at the plant. The licensee determined that a cesium-137 source was inadvertently melted in the furnace along with scrap metal. Contamination appears to be confined to the baghouse. ODH does not believe that any personnel were exposed to the radioactive material.

Radiation detectors at the plant apparently did not identify the radioactive source which was received at the plant in a load of scrap metal. The origin of the source is unknown at this time.

ODH is performing an on-site investigation of the event. Consultants were hired by the licensee to decontaminate the plant and are in contact with ODH for decontamination plan approval.

The NRC's Office of State and Tribal Programs and Office of Nuclear Materials Safety and Safeguards have been notified. There has been some local media interest in the event. The NRC's Region III (Chicago) Office is monitoring the State's investigation. This information was discussed with ODH and is current as of 10:00 a.m. CT on May 6, 2004.

CONTACTS:

James Lynch
(630) 829-9661

Kevin Null
(630) 829-9854