

February 24, 2004

This Event is not for public disclosure per Agreement State request until February 26, 2004

PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION OF EVENT OR UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE -- PNO-III-04-002

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.

<u>Facility</u>	<u>Licensee Emergency Classification</u>
Joseph M. Keyzers	<input type="checkbox"/> Notification of Unusual Event
Wisconsin Rapids, Wisconsin	<input type="checkbox"/> Alert
License: 097-1136-01	<input type="checkbox"/> Site Area Emergency
(Agreement State licensee)	<input type="checkbox"/> General Emergency
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable

SUBJECT: DAMAGED GAUGE CAUSED BY FIRE

DESCRIPTION:

On February 23, 2004, the Wisconsin Radiation Protection Section of the Department of Health and Family Services, State of Wisconsin, notified the NRC Operations Center that a NDC Model 104P portable mass gauge containing 25 millicuries of americium-241 (Am-241) was damaged in a fire while being temporarily stored at the residence of an employee of the licensee.

The State of Wisconsin was notified of the event late in the evening on February 19, 2004. In the morning of February 20, 2004, the State dispatched two inspectors to Wisconsin Rapids to conduct an investigation. Using a sodium iodide (NaI) detector the inspectors located the gauge under 3 to 4 inches of debris. Additional surveys of the damaged gauge with a Bicron microrem meter indicated a maximum radiation level of 30 millirem/hour on the surface of the gauge. The inspectors conducted a wipe test of the gauge and concluded that the Am-241 source was intact and not leaking.

On February 20, 2004, the inspectors double-bagged the damaged gauge and transported it to secured storage at a location under the State's control in Madison, Wisconsin. The manufacturer of the gauge has been contacted and will be traveling to Madison to prepare the damaged gauge for shipment back to the manufacturer's facility.

The NRC's Office of State and Tribal Programs and Office of Nuclear Materials Safety and Safeguards have been notified. The NRC's Region III (Chicago) Office is monitoring the State's investigation. This information is current as of 11:30 a.m. CDT on February 24, 2004.

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