

May 20, 2004

PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION OF EVENT OR UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE -- PNO-IV-04-011

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 IV, Arlington, Texas, staff on this date.

**Facility**

Scela, Inc. d/b/a Radiopharmacy of Boise  
2141 Airport Way, Suite 900  
Boise, Idaho 83705  
Docket No.: 030-35366  
License No.: 11-27664-01MD

**Licensee Emergency Classification**

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

SUBJECT: CONTAMINATION EVENTS DUE TO SPILL OF IODINE-131

DESCRIPTION:

On May 19, 2004, the licensee notified the NRC's Operations Center that on May 18, 2004, at approximately 9:00 am MT, a vial containing approximately 2 terabecquerel (58 millicuries) of iodine-131 had dropped to the floor of the facility's restricted radiopharmaceutical preparation area, shattered, and spilled its contents. It was further reported that the radiopharmacist who was present when the vial broke had been contaminated on his legs. The radiopharmacist was administered ThyroBlock as a precautionary measure. Decontamination was performed of the area where the spill occurred. Loose surface contamination was removed, the floor was covered with paper and the remaining fixed contamination was shielded. The licensee reported that they were continuing to monitor radiation levels at their facility.

Following the initial notification to NRC, the licensee provided further details regarding the spill. They reported that the skin contamination of the pharmacist was mainly located on the individual's knees. Decontamination efforts of the individual were only moderately successful, resulting in some fixed contamination of the skin that the licensee was continuing to monitor. Thyroid bioassays were performed for four members of the licensee's staff. The preliminary bioassay results for all individuals were reported to be less than 37 kilobecquerel (1 microcurie), well below the NRC's Annual Limit of Intake for iodine-131, which is 1.11 megabecquerel (30 microcuries). Per the licensee's policy, one individual was referred to a local medical facility for an evaluation. The licensee, who is affiliated with Cardinal Health Systems, is receiving health physics support from the latter's staff in California.

Additionally, on May 19, 2004, one of the licensee's customers notified NRC that a package containing radiopharmaceuticals delivered by the licensee was found to have removable surface contamination in excess of the customer's action levels. The customer identified the contamination to be iodine-131. Likewise, on May 19, 2004, another licensee customer notified the State of Idaho Radiation Control Program Director that they had received a radiopharmaceutical package from the licensee that was found to have removable surface contamination, though the level of contamination did not exceed the customer's action levels.

The NRC dispatched an inspector to the licensee's facility, and he was confirmed to be on site at 9:00 am (MT) today. In addition to reviewing the event at the licensee's site, the inspector will also review the possibility of any offsite contamination. The licensee indicated that there has been no media interest in the incident.

Region IV received notification of this occurrence from NRC's Operation Center on May 19, 2004. Region IV has informed OEDO, NMSS, and the Region's SLO and PAO. The information presented herein has been discussed with the licensee and the State of Idaho and is current as of 10:30 am (CT) on May 20, 2004.

ADAMS ACCESSION NUMBER: ML041410296

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