

December 23, 2010

PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION OF EVENT OR UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE PNO-II-10-005

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 Region II staff (Atlanta, Georgia) on this date.

Facility:

Honeywell International, Inc.
Honeywell Specialty Chemicals
Metropolis, IL
Dockets/License: 40-3392/SUB-526

Licensee Emergency Classification:

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

SUBJECT: HYDROFLUORIC ACID RELEASE AT THE HONEYWELL URANIUM CONVERSION FACILITY

On December 22, 2010, at approximately 3:00 p.m., CST, a Honeywell employee observed the release of hydrofluoric acid vapors from the chemical storage tank area of the facility, which is an area that is not subject to NRC regulatory oversight. The employee activated the Spray Tower Mitigation System which prevented the hydrofluoric acid vapors from going offsite. The licensee sounded an emergency alarm at approximately 3:05 p.m., CST, and activated its emergency response center, declared a Plant Emergency, and dispatched an emergency response team to the site of the release. Honeywell also ceased all uranium hexafluoride production activities in the Feeds Material Building as a precaution. The licensee stopped the release at approximately 4:15 p.m., CST, and shut-down the Spray Tower Mitigation System. The licensee terminated the Plant Emergency and declared an all clear at 6:30 p.m., CST.

There were no injuries from this event and the licensee confirmed that the hydrofluoric acid monitors stationed on the perimeter fence did not alarm during or after the event. The water run-off from the Spray Tower Mitigation System was collected in the storm water collection system, monitored for fluorine concentration and found to be below the regulatory release limits. The water was subsequently discharged to the Ohio River. The licensee is conducting an investigation into the cause of this event.

The NRC's Senior Resident Inspector from the Paducah Gaseous Diffusion Plant will be at the Honeywell facility today to conduct a preliminary follow-up of this event.

Region II received initial notification of this occurrence via a phone call from a member of the public. The licensee contacted the NRC shortly thereafter to make a courtesy notification of this non-reportable event. The information presented herein has been discussed with the licensee and the State of Illinois and is current as of 9:00 a.m. on December 23, 2010.

CONTACT: Jay L. Henson
(404) 997-4731

Marvin D. Sykes
(404) 997-4629