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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

RADIOACTIVELY CONTAMINATED VALVE REPORTED MISSING
FROM TRUCK STOP IN PAULSBORO, N.J.

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission has been informed that a radioactively contaminated valve from a portable waste-processing unit is missing in New Jersey.

NRC was informed of the loss late last week when the unit, owned by Chem-Nuclear Systems in South Carolina, arrived at the Millstone nuclear power plant in Waterford, Conn. The driver of the truck hauling the unit, which was to be used to process low-level radioactive waste at the plant, found the valve missing while at a truck stop in Paulsboro, N.J., on March 27. According to Chem-Nuclear, the valve was in place when the unit left Barnwell, S.C., en route to Millstone.

The elongated stainless-steel, three-way ball valve measures roughly 5 inches long by 2 inches wide, with a level on one side to open or close it. Although it has measurable radioactivity, handling the outside of the valve poses no immediate danger. But if the valve's internal contents were disturbed, radioactive material inside could spread and contaminate an individual. The valve had general contact readings of about 30 milliRoentgen per hour, with one small "hot spot" measuring twice that. By way of comparison, a chest x-ray generally leads to a radioactive dose of 15 to 20 milliRoentgens.

Anyone finding the valve should contact either the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection Hotline at (609) 292-7172 or the NRC Operations Center at (301) 816-5100.

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