

April 25, 2000

PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION OF EVENT OR UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE PNO-III-00-016

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 III staff (Lisle, Illinois) on this date.

Facility	Licensee Emergency Classification
St. James Hospital And Health Cntr	Notification of Unusual Event
Chicago Heights, Illinois	Alert
License No: IL-01289-01	Site Area Emergency
	General Emergency
	X Not Applicable

Subject: BRACHYTHERAPY MISADMINISTRATION

On April 24, 2000, the Illinois Department of Nuclear Safety (IDNS) reported to the NRC Operations Center, a brachytherapy misadministration involving a patient at St. James Hospital and Health Center located in Chicago Heights, Illinois.

On April 18, 2000, a catheter with four iridium-192 seeds, was inserted through the patient's nasal cavity to treat the bile ducts. Each of the four seeds contained approximately 5 millicuries (185 megabecquerels) of iridium- 192. The catheter was marked for correct placement on the patient's nose.

On April 20, 2000, the licensee noticed that the catheter had shifted from its marked position. An x-ray revealed that the seeds were no longer at the prescribed treatment site. The licensee believes that the treatment went as planned for the first 24 hours but the seeds moved sometime during the second 24 hours of a 70-hour planned treatment time. Preliminary calculations indicated that the dose to the treatment area differed from the prescribed dose by more than 20 percent.

The licensee is performing a dose assessment and will forward a written report to IDNS within 15 days.

The information in this Preliminary Notification was reviewed with IDNS.

Region III (Chicago) notified the NRC Office of State and Tribal Programs and the NRC Office of Nuclear Materials Safety and Safeguards of the incident.

The misadministration was reported to the NRC Operations Center

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at 3:23 p.m. (EDT) on April 24, 2000. This information is current as of
10:00 a.m. (CDT) on April 25, 2000.

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