

September 19, 2000

PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION OF EVENT OR UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE -- PNO-IV-00-022

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 staff on this date.

**Facility**

Tolunay Wong Engineers, Inc.  
Houston, Texas  
License No.: L04848-001  
Texas Licensee

**Licensee Emergency Classification**

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

**SUBJECT: STOLEN TROXLER PORTABLE GAUGE**

**DESCRIPTION:** On September 19, 2000, the Texas Bureau of Radiation Control (TBRC) notified Region IV by facsimile of a stolen portable gauge. The TBRC was informed by Tolunay Wong Engineering, Inc., that a Troxler Model 3430 (Serial No. 26131) portable gauge containing a 296 megabequerel (8 millicuries) cesium-137 source (Serial No. 75-9150) and a 1480 megabequerel (40 millicuries) americium-241/beryllium source (Serial No. 47-22513) had been stolen. The licensee informed TBRC that the gauge was stolen from a vehicle parked at the gauge user/operator's residence in Houston, Texas during the late evening or early morning hours between July 31 and August 1, 2000. The gauge case had been secured to a transport vehicle by steel cables. On August 1, 2000, the user discovered the cables had been cut and the gauge stolen. A police report was promptly filed with the Houston Police Department, and as of September 19, the gauge has not been recovered.

The State of Texas has informed officials with Mexico and the States of Arizona, Arkansas, Louisiana, and New Mexico. The State also informed the device manufacturer.

Region IV received notification of this occurrence by facsimile from TBRC on September 19, 2000. The State also transmitted the facsimile report to the NRC Operations Center. Region IV has informed the OEDO, IAT, NMSS, and OSTP.

This information has been discussed with the State and is current as of 3:00 p.m. on September 19, 2000.

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