

December 11, 2000

PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION OF EVENT OR UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE -- PNO-IV-00-035

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

Associated Soils Engineering, Inc.
Long Beach, California
License No.: 2446-19
California Licensee

Licensee Emergency Classification

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

SUBJECT: STOLEN PORTABLE GAUGE

DESCRIPTION: On December 8, 2000, the California Radiation Health Branch (CRHB) notified NRC's Operations Center by facsimile that a portable gauge was stolen. The CRHB was informed by Associated Soils Engineering, Inc., a California licensee, that a Campbell Pacific Nuclear moisture/density gauge, Model MC1 DR (Serial No. MD 01005909), was missing from the back of a locked truck. The truck was located in the gauge user's trailer park in Orange, California. The gauge was stolen between 2100 PST on December 3, 2000, and 0530 PST on December 4, 2000. The licensee reported that the gauge user picked up the gauge at the company's office in Long Beach, California, on December 3, 2000. The gauge is expected to contain a 296.0 megabequerel (8.0 millicurie) cesium-137 source and a 1628.0 megabequerel (44 millicurie) americium-241/beryllium source, and the State is confirming the activity of the sources. The local Police Department was notified by the licensee. The State was planning on informing the FBI. The licensee is offering a \$500.00 reward for return of the gauge.

NRC's Operations Center notified Region IV of this occurrence on December 8, 2000. Region IV has informed OEDO, NMSS, IAT, OPA, and OSTP.

This information has been discussed with the State and is current as of 1:00 p.m. on December 11, 2000.

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