

December 14, 2000

PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION OF EVENT OR UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE -- PNO-IV-00-034A

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**

Dames and Moore  
Phoenix, Arizona  
License No.: 07-228  
Arizona Licensee

**Licensee Emergency Classification**

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

SUBJECT: UPDATE ON STOLEN PORTABLE GAUGES

DESCRIPTION:

This is an update on an event that was reported by the Arizona Radiation Regulatory Agency (ARRA) on December 6, 2000, (PNO-IV-00-034) regarding two stolen Troxler Model 3440 portables gauges. The ARRA was informed by Dames and Moore on December 5, 2000, that two portable gauges (Serial No. 13024 and Serial No. 17318) were missing from a locked storage building at 1790 East River Road, Tucson, Arizona. Each gauge contained a 296.0 megabequerel (8.0 millicurie) cesium-137 source and a 1628.0 megabequerel (44 millicurie) americium-241/beryllium source.

On December 12, 2000, the ARRA notified Region IV that the two stolen gauges had been recovered. The ARRA received a phone call from the Arizona Department of Public Safety (DPS) Duty Officer at 7:00 p.m. on December 11, 2000, indicating that a teenage boy had found a Troxler Soil Density Moisture Gauge and had taken the gauge home. The ARRA dispatched two staff to pick up the gauge. The ARRA staff were informed by law enforcement officers that three teenage boys had discovered the gauge (Serial No. 17318) in Tucson. Neither the gauge case nor the gauge was locked. However, the gauge was in excellent condition. It was determined that the teenage boys had not tampered with the gauge. While at the boy's home, the ARRA was informed that a second gauge (Serial No. 13024) had been discovered on a dirt road at the East end of Linda Vista Road, approximately 5 miles north of the boy's home. Neither gauge case nor the gauge was locked on the second gauge. However, the trigger on the second gauge was broken and the source could not be moved from the shielded position. The ARRA performed leak tests on both gauges. The gauges were released to a Dames and Moore representative.

Region IV received notification of this occurrence by facsimile from ARRA on December 12, 2000.

This information has been discussed with the State and is current as of 1:45 p.m. on December 14, 2000.

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