

February 14, 2001

PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION OF EVENT OR UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE -- PNO-IV-01-009

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

Drash Consulting Engineers, Inc.
Harlingen, Texas
License No.: L04724-001

Licensee Emergency Classification

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

SUBJECT: STOLEN PORTABLE GAUGE

DESCRIPTION:

On February 14, 2001, the Texas Bureau of Radiation Control (TBRC) notified Region IV by facsimile of a stolen portable gauge. The TBRC was informed by Drash Consulting Engineers, Inc., that a Humboldt Model 5001-C (Serial No. 1467) portable gauge containing (10 millicuries) cesium-137 source (Serial No. 692GH) and a 1480 megabequerel (40 millicuries) americium-241/beryllium source (Serial No. NJO1429) had been stolen. The licensee informed TBRC that a gauge was stolen from the back of a pickup truck that was parked at an apartment complex in Harlingen, Texas, between 10:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. on January 1, 2001. The gauge case was locked and secured in the truck bed with chains. When the driver returned to the truck, he noted that the lid of the gauge case was cracked open and the gauge was missing. The licensee promptly notified the device manufacturer and the Harlingen Police Department. The licensee also placed an ad in the local newspaper offering a \$500.00 reward for the return of the gauge.

The State of Texas has informed Mexico, the states of Arizona, Arkansas, Louisiana, and New Mexico and the device manufacturer.

Region IV received notification of this occurrence by facsimile from TBRC at 2:00 p.m. on February 14, 2001. Region IV has informed OEDO, IAT, NMSS, OSTP, and Region IV's SLO and PAO.

This information has been discussed with the State and is current as of 3:00 p.m. on February 14, 2001.

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