

October 10, 2001

PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION OF EVENT OR UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE -- PNO-IV-01-045

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

Leighton and Associates
Irvine, California
License No.: 3109-30
California State Licensee

Licensee Emergency Classification

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

SUBJECT: STOLEN PORTABLE MOISTURE/DENSITY GAUGE

DESCRIPTION:

On October 10, 2001, the California Radiation Control Program (CRCP) notified the NRC Operations Center of a reported theft of a portable moisture/density gauge. CRCP reported that Leighton and Associates reported a gauge was stolen during the evening of October 8 while in temporary storage in a company vehicle parked at an employee's residence in Hemet, California. The gauge was a Troxler Model 3440, Serial Number 14409, containing a 1.85 gigabequerel source of americium-241/beryllium and a 0.370 gigabequerel source of cesium-137.

The licensee reported that after completing work on October 8, the gauge was transported to the user's home for overnight storage. The gauge user left the gauge in its transport case, which was chained to the bed of a truck, and parked the truck in his driveway overnight. The truck bed was not covered. The following day, the user discovered that the gauge had been stolen. The licensee has reported the theft to local police and confirmed on October 10 that a \$500 reward would be offered to anyone returning the gauge. The licensee plans to issue a press release notifying local residents of the reward.

Region IV received initial notification from the Operations Center on October 10 and updated information from CRCP on October 10.

Region IV has informed NMSS, OSTP, OEDO, IAT and the region's PAO.

This information has been discussed with the State and is current as of 2:00 p.m. (CT) on October 10, 2001.

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