

**PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION OF EVENT OR UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE** PNO-II-01-027

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 Region II staff (Atlanta, Georgia) on this date.

**Facility**

Geo Environmental Consultants  
 Agreement State Licensee  
 State of North Carolina  
 License No.: 060-0992-1

**Licensee Emergency Classification**

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

Subject: LOST GAUGE

On August 20, 2001, a State of North Carolina licensee lost a Troxler Electronic Laboratories Model 3430 portable gauge that contained 8 millicuries of cesium-137 and 49 millicuries of americium-241. Geo Environmental Consultants requested and were granted permission to perform licensed activities at an auxiliary landing strip used by the Charleston Air Force Base under South Carolina's reciprocity regulations. The landing strip is located in North, South Carolina. The State of South Carolina reported the loss to the NRC Operations Center on August 22, 2001.

Based on the information received from the State of South Carolina, the apparent cause of the loss was the failure of the licensee's technician to secure the gauge prior to and during transport to the landing strip. However, the licensee has not confirmed whether the device was stolen or fell from the rear of a pick-up truck onto a public highway prior to arriving at the landing strip. The gauge has not been located by the licensee nor the State of South Carolina. The State of North Carolina and the North City Police Department have been notified of the missing gauge.

Region II received initial notification of this event via telephone call from the NRC Headquarters Operations Center on August 22, 2001. The information presented herein has been discussed with the licensee, and is current as of 1:30 p.m., August 22, 2001.

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