

September 27, 2001

PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION OF EVENT OR UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE PNO-II-01-032

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

Longview Inspection
(An Agreement State Licensee)
Pascagoula, MS
License: MS-784-01

Licensee Emergency Classification

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

Subject: OVEREXPOSURE REPORT

The Mississippi Division of Radiological Health (the Division) notified the NRC Operations Center that the licensee had reported an overexposure to a radiographer's whole body dosimeter. The dosimeter processor reported that the dosimeter read 4700 millirems (47 millisieverts). The total exposure for the radiographer this calendar year is 5270 millirems (52.7 millisieverts). The event occurred when the radiographer was working with an AEA Technology, model 660B radiographic device on Monday, September 24, 2001. The device contained 78 curies (2.1 terabecquerels) of iridium-192. The licensee reported that the source failed to retract into the fully shielded position following a radiograph, and the radiographer did not realize the problem until the source guide tube was removed in preparation for another radiograph. The source reportedly was about 3 to 6 inches into the guide tube.

The device and guide tube were sent to the manufacturer for evaluation. The radiographer has been removed from working with radiation. The corporate Radiation Safety Officer is located in Texas and has plans to conduct an on-site investigation next Tuesday, October 2, 2001. The Division will also be on site during the investigation. Initial information reported that the radiographer's direct reading dosimeter went off scale (200 millirems), and that the alarming rate meter was operable, but the alarm could not be heard because of the noisy conditions at the site.

Region II received initial notification of this occurrence by telephone from the Mississippi Division of Radiological Health. This information presented herein has been discussed with the State and is current as of 3:45 p.m., Thursday, September 27, 2001.

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