

March 28, 2001

**PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION OF EVENT OR UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE** PNO-II-94-009A

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**

Bhate Engineering Corporation  
(An Agreement State Licensee)  
Birmingham, AL  
License: AL-655

**Licensee Emergency Classification**

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

Subject: STOLEN GAUGE RECOVERED

The Mississippi Division of Radiological Health (MDRH) reported to the NRC Operations Center that a portable gauge had been recovered. The gauge was found at the end of an access road in South Haven, Mississippi by a local resident who called the South Haven Fire Department. The MDRH responded to the event, conducted initial radiation surveys, and took possession of the gauge. The MDRH reported that the gauge was still locked with the radioactive source locked in a safe position.

The gauge was identified as a Troxler Moisture Density Gauge, Model 3411D, serial number 5155, containing approximately 8 millicuries (296 megabecquerels) of cesium-137 and 40 millicuries (1.48 gigibecquerels) of americium-241. The gauge was reported stolen from a construction site in Memphis, TN on February 21, 1994.

The MDRH notified the State of Alabama and the licensee of the recovered gauge. The gauge will be tested for radiation leakage before it is released to the licensee.

Region II received initial notification of this occurrence by telephone from the MDRH at 2:30 p.m., Wednesday, March 28, 2001. The information presented herein has been discussed with the States of Mississippi, Alabama, and Tennessee, and is current as of 9:00 a.m., Thursday, March 29, 2001.

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