

May 7, 2002

PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION OF EVENT OR UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE -- PNO-III-02-021

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 III staff on this date.

Facility

A & W Iron and Metal, Inc.
7568 Otten Drive
Kewaskum, Wisconsin 53040
Docket: N/A
License: Non-licensee

Licensee Emergency Classification

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

SUBJECT: RADIOACTIVE MATERIAL FOUND IN A SCRAP YARD

On May 6, 2002, at about 2:00 p.m., representatives from the State of Wisconsin Radiation Protection Unit contacted NRC staff concerning radioactive material found in a scrap yard approximately 2 weeks earlier. On approximately April 23, 2002, as an incoming shipment arrived at the scrap yard, the radiation monitor detected a radiation source in the truck. A & W representatives performed a survey of this shipment, located the device containing the radioactive material, and segregated it in a remote area in the yard.

A & W informed the State of Wisconsin of the radioactive material on May 6, 2002, who arrived at the scrap yard to perform radiation surveys and sealed source leak tests. The Wisconsin representatives described the scrap as a damaged gauging unit with all shielding materials apparently removed. The State of Wisconsin representatives measured radiation exposure levels of 2.4 Roentgens per hour at contact and 4.8 milliRoentgens per hour at 1 meter from the device. The leak tests were negative for contamination. The scrap yard is maintaining security of the radioactive material by keeping it in a shielded container within a locked trailer.

A tag on the device identified it as a Nuclear Instruments Corporation Model 50-T (serial number 1180) containing 10 millicuries cesium-137 and 60 millicuries americium-241: beryllium. Region III has requested the manufacturer, now known as TN Technologies, to attempt to trace the owner of the device by means of the serial number.

Two Region III inspectors are being dispatched to the site and are expected to arrive the morning of May 8.

Region III has informed NMSS of this incident. The State of Wisconsin has also been informed of this incident.

All information is current as of 12:15 p.m. on May 7, 2002.

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