

May 17, 2002

PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION OF EVENT OR UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE -- PNO-IV-02-024

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

Huntington Memorial Hospital
Pasadena, CA
License No.: 0239-19
California Agreement State Licensee

Licensee Emergency Classification

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

SUBJECT: THEFT OF RADIOACTIVE MATERIAL

DESCRIPTION:

On May 16, 2002, the California Radiation Health Branch (CRHB) notified NRC's Operations Center that a package containing radioactive material had been stolen. Huntington Memorial Hospital, a California licensee, notified CRHB at 12:15 p.m. (PDT) on May 16, 2002 that a package containing palladium-103 seeds had been stolen from an unsecured Airborne Express truck parked at 39 Congress Avenue in Pasadena, California, at 11:00 a.m. (PDT) on May 15, 2002. The Airborne Express driver was not aware of the theft until the licensee notified them that they had received only one of the two packages they were expecting to receive. The package contained 72 seeds for a total activity of 4.07 gigabecquerels (110 millicuries) of palladium-103 and was shipped as an excepted package. Airborne Express discovered that three other packages, not containing radioactive material, were also stolen. The licensee promptly reported the theft to the local police department. CRHB is investigating the incident. The State indicated that there are no plans to issue a press release by the State or the licensee at this time.

Region IV received notification of this occurrence from the State on the evening of May 16, 2002. Region IV has informed OEDO, OSTP, IAT, NMSS, and the Region's SLO and PAO.

This information has been discussed with the State and is current as of 11:00 a.m. (CDT) on May 17, 2002.

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