

June 10, 2002

PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION OF EVENT OR UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE -- PNO-IV-02-029

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**

Albemarle Corporation  
Magnolia, Arkansas  
License No.: ARK-717-BP-11-99  
Arkansas Agreement State Licensee

**Licensee Emergency Classification**

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

SUBJECT: SOURCE DISCONNECT FROM SOURCE ROD

DESCRIPTION:

On June 7, 2002, the Arkansas Department of Health (ADH) notified NRC that a source had become disconnected from the source rod of a fixed density gauge. On June 6, 2002 at 4:30 p.m. (CDT), Albemarle Corporation located in Magnolia, Arkansas informed the ADH that a Ronan Engineering Company Model SA-15 fixed density gauge source was damaged. The gauge contained two 5 millicurie sources of cesium-137. The licensee informed ADH that the device had been locked out on June 3, 2002, for maintenance. On June 6, 2002, while the source housing was being adjusted, the licensee noted that the source rod was in a different configuration. The licensee conducted radiation surveys and determined that one of the 5 millicurie sources appeared to have been disconnected from the source rod. The licensee secured the immediate area and restricted access. The licensee obtained the services of a contractor to conduct the source retrieval and packaging for disposal. The licensee is performing a calculation to determine the dose to licensee personnel. However, it is believed that personnel were not exposed to doses in excess of the 100 millrem dose limit for members of the public. ADH is continuing the investigation of this incident.

Region IV received notification of this occurrence from the Operations Center on June 7, 2002. Region IV has informed OEDO, NMSS, OSTP, and the Region's SLO and PAO.

This information has been discussed with the licensee and is current as of 1:45 p.m. (CDT) on June 10, 2002.

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