

October 16, 2002

THIS EVENT IS NOT FOR PUBLIC DISCLOSURE PER AGREEMENT STATE REQUEST UNTIL 10/18/02.

PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION OF EVENT OR UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE -- PNO-IV-02-057

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

Construction Inspection and Testing
Tempe, AZ
License No.: 7-98
Arizona Agreement State Licensee

Licensee Emergency Classification

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

SUBJECT: LOST OR STOLEN PORTABLE GAUGE

DESCRIPTION:

On October 15, 2002, the Arizona Radiation Regulatory Agency (ARRA) notified NRC's Operations Center of the loss of a portable gauge. Construction Inspection and Testing, an Arizona licensee, notified ARRA at 3:25 p.m. (MST) on October 15, 2002, that a Troxler moisture/density gauge was lost or stolen between 10:30 a.m. and 11:15 a.m. from the bed of the pickup while in transit between job sites. The device operator had conducted a job in the vicinity of Cactus and 151st Avenue in Tempe, Arizona. The operator placed the gauge in the back of the pickup, left the tailgate down, and proceeded to the next job site. While in transit, the operator remembered that he had left the tailgate down and stopped to secure the pickup bed. The operator then discovered that the gauge was missing. The operator attempted to locate the gauge by searching his route, but failed to find the gauge. The licensee reported that the gauge handle was not locked. The device was a Troxler Model 3400 series (Serial No. 29519) moisture/density gauge containing a nominal 370.0 megabecquerels (10 millicuries) cesium-137 source and a nominal 1.85 gigabecquerels (50 millicuries) americium-241/beryllium source. The licensee notified the local police department and is offering a \$250 reward for the return of the gauge. ARRA is continuing to investigate this event.

The state of Arizona plans to inform Mexico, the FBI, and the states of Colorado, Nevada, Utah, New Mexico, and California.

Region IV received notification of this occurrence from NRC's Operations Center on October 15, 2002 at approximately 6:30 p.m. (CDT). Region IV has informed OEDO, NMSS, OSTP, IAT, and the Regions PAO and SLO.

This information has been discussed with the State and is current as of 10:30 a.m. (CDT) on October 16, 2002.

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