

November 12, 2002

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

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: UPDATE - LOST PORTABLE GAUGE FOUND

DESCRIPTION:

On October 15, 2002, the Arizona Radiation Regulatory Agency (the Agency) notified NRC's Operations Center of the reported loss of a portable gauge (EN No. 39289 and PNO-IV-02-057). Construction Inspection and Testing, an Arizona licensee, reported that a Troxler moisture/density gauge had been lost or stolen from the bed of the pickup while in transit between job sites.

On November 8, 2002, the Agency notified NRC's Operations Center of the recovery of the lost gauge. A non-licensee had reported that one of their employees had found a gauge on a street on the east side of Tempe, Arizona, and had brought it back to their facility in Phoenix, Arizona. The Agency dispatched an inspector to confiscate the gauge. Upon investigation, the Agency determined that the gauge was the one reported lost by Construction Inspection and Testing on October 15, 2002. The gauge was found unlocked, but the source rod was bent enough to prevent exposing the cesium-137 source. The Agency obtained swipe samples on the outside of the gauge to determine if there was removable contamination. The results of the swipe test analyses indicate that there was no contamination on the gauge. The licensee and the Agency are continuing to investigate this event.

The Agency informed Mexico, the FBI, and the States of Colorado, Nevada, Utah, New Mexico, and California.

Region IV received initial notification of this occurrence by facsimile from the Agency at 2:30 p.m. (CST) on November 8, 2002. Region IV has informed OEDO, NMSS, OSTP, and the Region's PAO and SLO.

This information has been discussed with the State and is current as of 10:30 a.m. (CST) on November 12, 2002.

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