November 27, 2002

THIS EVENT IS NOT FOR PUBLIC DISCLOSURE PER AGREEMENT STATE REQUEST UNTIL 12/2/02.

PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION OF EVENT OR UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE -- PNO-IV-02-071

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
Soils and Material Consultants, Inc.
Arvada, Colorado
License No.: 595-01
Colorado Agreement State Licensee

Licensee Emergency Classification
___ Notification of Unusual Event
___ Alert
___ Site Area Emergency
___ General Emergency
_X_ Not Applicable

SUBJECT: STOLEN PORTABLE GAUGE

DESCRIPTION:

On November 27, 2002, the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (the Department) notified NRC's Operations Center of the reported theft of a portable moisture/density gauge.

On November 20, 2002, the Department received telephone notification of the theft of the gauge from Soils and Materials Consultants, Inc., a Colorado licensee. The licensee provided written notification on November 25, 2002. The licensee reported that the gauge had been stolen on November 20, 2002, from the back of a camper truck while parked at a Walmart located in Brighton, Colorado. The gauge was locked in its transportation case, but not secured to the bed of the truck. However, the camper shell was locked. The operator reported that the camper shell was pried open, and the gauge and transportation case were missing from the truck. The gauge is a CPN International Inc. Model MC1-DR (Serial No. MD 80804445), containing a 0.37 gigabequerel (10 millicurie) source of cesium-137 and a 1.85 gigabequerel (50 millicurie) source of americium-241:beryllium. The licensee promptly notified the local police. The Department is continuing to investigate this event.

Region IV received notification of this occurrence by phone from the Department at 11:15 a.m. (CST) on November 27, 2002. Region IV has informed the OEDO, NMSS, OSTP, IAT, and the Region's PAO and SLO.

This information has been discussed with the State and is current as of 10:00 a.m. on November 27, 2002.

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