

December 9, 2002

PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION OF EVENT OR UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE -- PNO-IV-02-074A

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**

Geosoils  
Van Nuys, California  
License No.: CA 4741-19  
California 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 December 6, 2002, the California Radiation Health Branch (the Branch) notified NRC's Operations Center that a portable moisture/density gauge previously reported as stolen has been found.

On December 2, 2002, the Branch notified NRC's Operations Center of the theft of a portable gauge. Geosoils, a California licensee, reported that a CPN International, Inc. Model MC-3 (Serial No. M370903921), moisture/density gauge was stolen from a gauge operator's truck. The gauge contained a nominal 0.37 gigabecquerel (10 millicurie) of Cesium-137 and 1.85 gigabecquerel (50 millicurie) of americium-241; beryllium.

On December 5, 2002, the licensee notified the Branch that the gauge had been recovered and intact. The gauge was found abandoned on a street in South Central Los Angeles. The Los Angeles police department and fire department were notified of a suspicious orange package with radiation symbols that was unattended in the street. Both agencies responded to the call and determined that the gauge was undamaged. The licensee retrieved the gauge from the police department, and verified that the sources were still in the gauge. The licensee plans to have the gauge sent to a CPN authorized service representative for inspection.

Region IV received notification of this occurrence from NRC's Operations Center on 2002. Region IV has informed NMSS, OEDO, STP, and Region IV's SLO.

This information is current as of 10:45 a.m. (CST) on December 9, 2002.

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