

**PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION OF EVENT OR UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE -- PNO-IV-02-080**

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**

Lor Geotechnical Group  
Riverside, California  
License No.: CA 5459-33  
California Agreement State Licensee

**Licensee Emergency Classification**

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

**SUBJECT: STOLEN PORTABLE GAUGE**

**DESCRIPTION:**

On December 30, 2002, the California Radiation Health Branch (the Branch) notified NRC's Operations Center of the theft of a portable gauge containing 0.37 gigabequerel (10 millicurie) of Cesium-137 and 1.47 gigabequerel (40 millicurie) of americium-241:beryllium.

Lor Geotechnical Group, a California licensee, reported the theft of a Humbolt Model HSI5001P (Serial No. 838) moisture/density gauge to the Branch on December 30, 2002. The licensee reported that the gauge was stolen from a gauge operator's truck while parked at his residence in Redlands, California. On Saturday, December 28, 2002, the operator took the gauge to his residence after performing a job. The employee reported that the gauge was chained and locked on the back of his truck. On Monday morning, the employee noticed that the gauge, chains, and lock were missing from the back of the truck. He reported the theft to the licensee's radiation safety officer (RSO). The RSO notified the branch and the local police. The licensee plans to post a notice in the local newspapers offering a reward for the return of the gauge.

Region IV received notification of this occurrence from NRC's Operations Center on December 30, 2002. Region IV has informed Mexico, NMSS, OEDO, STP, IAT, and Region IV's SLO.

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