January 27, 2003

THIS EVENT IS NOT FOR PUBLIC DISCLOSURE PER AGREEMENT STATE REQUEST UNTIL 1/29/03.

PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION OF EVENT OR UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE -- PNO-IV-03-005

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
Giles Engineering Associates
Dallas, TX
License No.: L04919
Texas 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 January 24, 2003, the Texas Department of Health (the Department) notified NRC's Operations Center of the reported theft of a portable moisture/density gauge.

On January 24, 2003, the Department received notification of the theft of the gauge from Giles Engineering Associates, a Texas licensee. The licensee reported that the gauge and case had been stolen from an Econoline van while parked at an apartment complex in Duncanville, Texas. The gauge operator became aware of the theft at 4:30 a.m. on January 24 when he noticed the local police outside his apartment. Three vans, including the licensee's, had been burglarized. The gauge was locked in its transportation case in a storage compartment in the cargo area of the locked van. The gauge and several other items were stolen from the van through a broken window. The gauge is a Troxler Electronic Laboratories Model 3430 (Serial No. 031693), containing a 0.29 gigabequerel (8 millicurie) source of cesium-137 and a 1.48 gigabequerel (40 millicurie) source of americium-241:beryllium. The licensee also notified the device manufacturer. The Department is continuing to investigate this event.

Region IV received notification of this occurrence from NRC's Operations Center on January 24, 2003. Region IV has informed NMSS, OEDO, STP, IAT and the Region's PAO and SLO. The SLO will inform Mexico.

This information has been discussed with the State and is current as of 8:50 a.m. (CST) on January 27, 2003.

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