

February 14, 2003

This event is not available for public disclosure per Agreement State request until 2/21/03

PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION OF EVENT OR UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE -- PNO-III-03-008

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 III staff on this date.

Facility

University of Iowa

Iowa City, Iowa

Docket:

License: State of Iowa License

Licensee Emergency Classification

Notification of Unusual Event

Alert

Site Area Emergency

General Emergency

Not Applicable

SUBJECT: BRACHYTHERAPY MEDICAL EVENT

DESCRIPTION:

On February 14, 2003, the Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH), Bureau of Radiological Health, notified Region III (Chicago) that a patient being treated for cancer of the bronchial area received a dose of 700 rads (7 gray) to an unintended site using a Varian-TEM Ltd. Model VariSource high dose rate (HDR) remote afterloader. Prior to the treatment the licensee measured and tested a catheter using a dummy source. On the first day of treatment (February 6, 2003), the licensee used what they thought was the correct catheter during the treatment.

When the patient returned for the second treatment on February 13, 2003, the medical physicist discovered that the catheter used during the first treatment was 30 centimeters too short. The licensee estimated that the first treatment was delivered to the skin in the nasal passage rather than the bronchial area. The attending physician was present at the time the error was discovered and both the patient and attending physician were informed of the misadministration. The licensee is currently reviewing the root cause of the event and developing corrective actions. The licensee will provide its report to the IDPH by February 28, 2003.

The Office of State and Tribal Programs and the Office of Nuclear Materials Safety and Safeguards were notified of the incident.

The information in this preliminary notification has been reviewed with the Iowa Department of Public Health. The information in this preliminary notification is current as of February 14, 2003, at 11:30 a.m. (CST).

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