

March 24, 2003

PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION OF EVENT OR UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE PNO-II-03-003

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 Region II staff (Atlanta, Georgia) on this date.

Facility

Gallet and Associates, Inc.
(An Agreement State Licensee)
Birmingham, AL
License: 991

Licensee Emergency Classification

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

Subject: STOLEN PORTABLE GAUGE

The Alabama Bureau of Radiation Control (the Bureau) notified the NRC Operations Center that the licensee reported the theft of a portable gauge containing radioactive material. The gauge was stolen about 10:00 a.m. on Friday, March 22, 2003. The gauge was a Campbell Pacific, Model MC-3, serial number M3-30801649, containing 10 millicuries (370 megabecquerels) of cesium-137, and 40 millicuries (1.48 gigabecquerels) of americium-241. The radioactive sources are encapsulated, sealed and locked inside the gauge, and do not present a hazard as long as they remain inside the device housing.

The shipping container and the gauge were stolen from the back of a company pickup truck parked at an employee's home near Homewood, AL. The device was locked inside the shipping container, and the shipping container was chained and locked to the bed of a company pickup truck.

The Alabama Emergency Management Agency was notified, and the local police authorities have the event under investigation. A press release was issued by the licensee, and a reward was to be offered for information leading to the recovery of the device.

Region II received initial notification of this occurrence by electronic mail from the Bureau. This information has been discussed with the Bureau and is current as of 12:00 noon, Monday, March 24, 2003.

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