

January 9, 2004

THIS EVENT IS NOT FOR PUBLIC DISCLOSURE PER AGREEMENT STATE REQUEST UNTIL 1/10/04.

PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION OF EVENT OR UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE -- PNO-IV-04-002

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

The Methodist Hospital
Houston, Texas
License No.: L00457-000
Texas Agreement State Licensee

Licensee Emergency Classification

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

SUBJECT: MISSING STRONTIUM-90 SOURCE

DESCRIPTION:

On January 8, 2004, the Texas Department of Health, Bureau of Radiation Control (the State) notified NRC's Operations Center of the discovery of a missing strontium-90 intravascular brachytherapy (IVB) source contained within a Novoste Beta Cath System (Serial No. 92607).

The State received notification on January 5, 2004, that a strontium-90 source was missing from The Methodist Hospital, a Texas licensee located in Houston, Texas. The licensee discovered the source missing on January 5, 2004. The Novoste System source train (Serial No. ZB-520) contained approximately 2.04 gigabecquerel (55 millicuries) of strontium-90. The device was last accounted for on December 17, 2003, when the licensee performed a functional test in the Fondren Building at the licensee's main facility in Houston and had not been used for medical treatment since. The licensee has searched the facility and the trash, but has not found the missing device. The licensee and the State are continuing to investigate.

Region IV received notification of this occurrence from NRC's Operation Center on January 8, 2004. Region IV has informed OEDO, NMSS, OSTP and the Region's SLO and PAO.

This information has been discussed with the State and is current as of 10:30 a.m. CST on January 9, 2004.

ADAMS ACCESSION NUMBER: ML040090339

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