

~~L. J. Johnson~~
L. Rogers
Isotope Files

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Jack R. Roeder, Inspection Specialist for Staff
Operations, Division of Compliance, HQ

OCT 17 1967

Alvin F. Ryan, Investigation Specialist
Region I, Division of Compliance
Original Signed by:
A. F. Ryan

COMPLIANCE INQUIRY MEMORANDUM

U. S. RADIUM CORPORATION
ELOCESBURG, PENNSYLVANIA
LICENSE NO. 37-30-2
LOSS OF 2.8929 CURIES OF AMERICIUM-241 IN OXIDE FORM

On October 4, 1967, at 4:20 p.m. R. S. Cleveland, Senior Radiation Specialist, CO:1, received a telephone call from Dr. John G. MacHutchin, Chairman of the Radioisotope Committee for the licensee who reported that on the preceding day, in the course of familiarizing an employee with the americium dry box preliminary to resuming operations in the radium-ameridium laboratory, a vial containing 2.8929 curies of americium oxide was found to be missing. A preliminary search failed to locate the missing material. It was assumed that the vial of americium oxide may have been discarded accidentally during decontamination work conducted in the laboratory between June 20, 1967 and October 3, 1967, when the loss was discovered.

On October 5, 1967, a telegram was received from the licensee confirming the oral report made by Dr. MacHutchin. The original and a copy of this telegram were forwarded to CO:HQ on October 6, 1967.

During the decontamination of the radium-ameridium laboratory, 233 drums, cartons or crates of radioactive waste were shipped to Nuclear Engineering, Inc., Morehead, Kentucky, for disposal by burial. Upon becoming aware that the americium may have inadvertently been disposed of as waste in the clean-up operations, Dr. MacHutchin had telephoned to the burial ground to ascertain whether the waste containers, shipped in three different lots had been buried. According to MacHutchin, he was informed that the material had been disposed of by burial but was reclaimable.

No personnel exposure resulted from the loss of the americium oxide.

CO:1 initiated investigation of this loss at licensee's premises on the morning of October 6, 1967, and continued the investigation until October 13, 1967.

Licensee issued a press release for publication in the local area newspapers.

IX-1220

The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Department of Health, was notified of this incident at 9:00 a.m. October 6, 1967, and a representative of the department was present during the investigation conducted October 6 thru 12, 1967, inclusive.

No other federal agencies were notified of this occurrence nor was assistance of the Radiological Emergency Assistance Team requested.

The report of investigation is in preparation and it is anticipated that it will be submitted prior to November 1, 1967.