

June 27, 2006

PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION OF EVENT OR UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE -- PNO-IV-06-008

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 IV, Arlington, Texas, staff on this date.

Facility

U.S. Department of the Interior
U.S. Geological Survey
Denver Federal Center
Denver, CO
Docket No: 030-03728
License No. 05-01399-08

Licensee Emergency Classification

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

SUBJECT: LEAKAGE OF CONTAMINATED WATER FROM STORAGE TANK

DESCRIPTION:

On Friday, June 23, 2006, the licensee reported to the NRC's Region IV office that they had detected leakage from a below-grade storage tank in Lakewood, Colorado. The tank is used to store components from an adjacent research reactor. The water in the tank includes low concentrations of cobalt-60 significantly below the effluent concentration limit in 10 CFR Part 20. The tank is constructed of concrete and has a stainless steel liner. The licensee indicated that decreasing tank water levels indicated the possibility of a leak and actions were initiated to correct the problem. Some repairs to the tank have been completed which reduced the leakage rate to less than 3 gallons per day. Further efforts to address the leakage are planned by the licensee. The licensee estimates the total leakage to be less than 600 gallons at this time with a total activity of less than one microcurie of Co-60.

A NRC Region IV inspector and an inspector from the NRC's Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation are being sent to conduct an onsite inspection.

The State of Colorado was informed telephonically on June 26, 2006.

Region IV received notification of this occurrence telephonically from the licensee on June 23, 2006, and received additional information from them on June 26, 2006. Region IV has informed NRR, NMSS, and OPA.

The information presented herein has been discussed with the licensee and is current as of June 27, 2006, at 12:45 p.m.

ADAMS ACCESSION NUMBER: ML061780350

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