DCS No.: 03000882061115
Date: November 15, 2006

PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION OF EVENT OR UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE PNO-I-06-013

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 I staff on this date.

Facility
Princeton University
Office of Environmental Health and Safety
262 Alexander Street
Princeton, NJ 08544

Docket No.: 030-00882
License No.: 29-05185-24

Licensee Emergency Classification
___ Notification of Unusual Event
___ Alert
___ Site Area Emergency
___ General Emergency
_X_ Not Applicable

SUBJECT: LEAKING STRONTIUM-90 PLATED SOURCE IDENTIFIED AT UNIVERSITY

On November 15, 2006, the Princeton University Radiation Safety Officer (RSO) notified the NRC Operations Center that a leaking strontium-90 (Sr-90) source had been identified. The Sr-90 is electroplated on a piece of foil located within a brass cylinder. The source has a current activity of 180 microcuries. The Sr-90 source was identified as leaking on November 13, 2006. The previous leak test performed in May 2006 did not show any contamination.

The source was stored in a drawer located in a room in Jadwin Hall. Surveys show that the drawer is contaminated and that some locations on the floor in this room have minor contamination. The source was used by one researcher in a room across the hall from the storage location between May 2006 and September 2006. The source was not used in October or November. Plates that came into contact with the source during the research activity in this room are contaminated. Complete surveys of the room where the source was used are underway. Surveys of the hallway between the two rooms show no contamination. Only three individuals have been in contact with the source: the researcher; the Radiation Safety technician who performed the leak test; and the RSO who has been examining the source. Preliminary surveys of the researcher's office did not identify contamination. A urine bioassay will be performed when the researcher returns to the University next week.

The licensee notified NRC concerning this matter in accordance with 10 CFR 30.50(b)(1)(i) and will follow with a 30-day written report. The University notified personnel in Jadwin Hall about the leaking source. An article was published in the University newspaper and in the local newspaper. The Region I Office of Public Affairs is prepared to respond to media inquiries.

The State of New Jersey has been notified. This information is current as of 4:00 p.m., November 15, 2006.

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James Dwyer (610) 337-5309

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SUNSI REVIEW COMPLETED BY: JPD 11/15/06

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