



Department of the Interior  
US Geological Survey  
Box 25046 MS-974  
Denver CO, 80225  
April 17, 2007

U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission  
Attn: Alexander Adams NRR/ADRO/DPR/PRT  
MS O-12 G-13  
Washington, DC 20555-0001

Mr. Adams,

This letter is to report a violation of our operating procedure requirement for control of the key to the reactor control console at the US Geological Survey TRIGA reactor facility (license R-113, Docket 50-274).

On Thursday, April 12, 2007, the reactor was operated for 8 hours at full power and shutdown at 1352 hours. At 1511 hours, the daily shutdown checklist was completed and around 1630 hours the facility was secured for the day. When the operator began a startup checklist the next morning (April 13) around 0740 hours, he found that the lockbox containing the reactor console keys was not securely latched and could be opened by pulling on the door.

GSTR Procedure #1, paragraph 3(e) states, "After the final shutdown for the day, a shutdown checklist shall be completed and the console key shall be under the control of a licensed operator or locked in the key box." Contrary to this requirement, the console key was not locked in the key box during the night of April 12-13, 2007.

This violation was caused by failure of the operator to ensure that the lock box cover was latched after reactor operations were completed on April 12, 2007. Operators had been previously instructed to ensure that the lock box was latched securely by pulling on the cover after it was shut.

Recurrence of this event will be prevented by two actions: (1) all operators will be instructed on proper use of the lock box that contains the console keys, and (2) for a period of at least three months, locking of the box will be verified by a second person at the end of reactor operations on each day that the reactor is operated. This verification will be recorded on a checklist kept in the control room. At the end of the three month

A001

period, the Reactor Supervisor will evaluate whether this verification check should be continued or not.

In addition, the staff will investigate the possible use of a different type of key lock box that would be less subject to errors of the type made in this event.

Please contact me if you have any further questions regarding this issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Tim DeBey".

Tim DeBey  
USGS Reactor Supervisor