



EMD

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SNM-1120
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P&C-07/39

June 27, 2007

Mark Roberts
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Region I
475 Allendale Road
King of Prussia, PA 19406-1415

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Subject: NRC Notification of Astro-Nuclear

The Curtiss-Wright Electro-Mechanical Corporation (EMD) recently uncovered piping containing enriched uranium at a location previously not known to have residual radioactive materials. A recent water line break necessitated excavation and replacement of a broken active water supply line. The location of initial excavation is noted on the attached site diagram (See Figure 1). This location once housed Building 6, Astro-Nuclear. Activities in the facilities were conducted under government contract, ceased in 1972 and the building razed in 1982. Since this time the area has remained a grassy field. Although Astro-Nuclear operations were not licensed by the NRC the residual material will be removed, stored, inventoried and shipped for disposal under the current SNM-1120 license. Thus, written notification of the occurrence was deemed the proper course of action.

Based on the history of the proposed digging location, Astro-Nuclear facility, precautionary steps were taken at the onset of the water line project. Surveys and soil sampled for gamma spectroscopy analysis were acquired at the onset of the digging project. Original results indicated only naturally occurring materials in the soil. While attempting to locate the broken water line a vertical rising pipe, consisting of both cast iron and terra cotta materials, was encountered and removed from the excavation. Sample analysis of the pipe contents indicated activity was present.

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Upon this determination, the job was stopped and excavation personnel were required to utilize a personnel contamination monitor. Qualified radiation workers and Health Physics personnel were utilized to contain the removed pipe, stow it in a controlled location, and conduct surveys of the general area. Upon determination that no activity had been dislodged from the pipe removal activity, the original contractors were permitted to continue pipe break location operations. Efforts to locate the broken water supply pipe were now focused at a location away from the radiological contaminated pipe area. Review of site drawings revealed the location of the piping system was once associated with the Astro-facility. No further pipes were encountered during the pipe location project.

Alpha spectroscopy analysis of the residual interior pipe crud indicates a U-235 enrichment of approximately 30 percent. Surveys were conducted to record the condition of the area prior to back filling. Documentation of the location and depth of the piping were also completed. This area has been added to EMD's priorities list for future characterization and potential remedial actions.

If you have any questions or require further information regarding the Astro-Nuclear radiological status, please contact Lisa Lamantia at (724) 275-5032.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Charles T. Lim", is positioned above the typed name.

Charles T. Lim
Manager, Regulatory Compliance

Attachments:

- 1 – Site Drawing
- 1 – Photos of Astro Area



Photo 1: Location of initial digging where contaminated drain line was encountered. Photograph is facing North. Building 5D is in the background.



Photo 2: Excavated piping had been oriented in a vertical position below ground. Photos shows the pipe segment that was broken off and its contents.