

PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION OF EVENT OR UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE--PNO-I-89-98

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:  
Chem, Incorporated  
Tuxedo, New York  
Docket Number 70-687

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

Subject: LEAK IN HOT CELL EXHAUST DUCT

During April 1989 the licensee identified a possible discharge of slightly contaminated water through a storm drain located in the onsite parking lot. Additional slightly contaminated water ( $3E-6$  microcuries/cc I-131) was found in the same drain line on November 28, 1989. The licensee stated that their investigation indicated that the source of the contamination was a broken contaminated underground concrete hot cell exhaust duct located under the floor of the building. The break in the duct was traced to an area downstream of the system charcoal filters and upstream of the final HEPA filter housing. Environmental sampling of all available surface and ground water onsite was conducted by the licensee. There is no evidence of measureable offsite environmental releases. The licensee has initiated excavation of the duct for repair, has increased the frequency of environmental water sampling and has initiated installation of wells in the parking lot so that ground water samples can be obtained and analyzed. A Region I inspector will be at the site on December 19, 1989 to review the licensee's actions and analytical results to date.

The State of New York has been notified and Region I is coordinating with New York because of jurisdictional aspects of NRC and NY state licensed activities at the site. This Preliminary Notification is for information only and is being issued because of recent public and media interest in activities at the site.

NRC Region I received notification of this occurrence by telephone from the licensee at about 2:00 p.m. on December 12, 1989. The information is current to 10:30 a.m. on December 15, 1989.

CONTACT: J. Roth  
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R. Bores  
346-5213

7:30  
JE-34  
of

DCS No: 070687891215  
Date: December 15, 1989

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