

Date: April 21, 1995

PDR

PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION OF EVENT OR UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE PNO-III-95-14

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 III staff on this date.

Facility

Dresden 2 and 3
Commonwealth Edison Co.
Morris, Illinois

Licensee Emergency Classification

General Emergency
Site Area Emergency
Alert
Unusual Event
X Not Applicable

Docket Nos. 50-237, 50-249

Subject: NUMEROUS CONTAMINATED ITEMS FOUND DURING EXTENSIVE SURVEY

On April 3 the licensee identified a radioactively contaminated oil filter during a routine radiation survey of garbage in the Clean Garbage Building which is located outside of the Radiologically Protected Area (RPA). Subsequent surveys identified 3 additional contaminated items in the building.

In response, the licensee initiated a multi-discipline investigation team on April 5. The team's initial actions included a material lockdown of the site and a comprehensive survey of the owner-controlled area with about 40 radiation protection technicians from the Dresden, Braidwood, Zion, and Byron stations. As of April 20 with about 98 percent of the site surveyed, 409 contaminated items, primarily tools, have been identified. It appeared that some of the items were outside of the RPA for several years.

Most items had fixed contamination at levels less than 5,000 disintegrations per minute per frisk, which is the minimum radiation detection capability licensees must have per NRC guidelines. Twenty-one of the items had removable contamination on them. The highest level of contamination identified on an item was 140,000 disintegrations per minute per frisk. If all of the contamination on this item was inhaled by an individual, which would be the most limiting pathway and is highly unlikely, the resultant effective dose equivalent to the individual would be approximately 7 millirem (70 microSieverts) over the person's lifetime. Three other items had contamination levels in excess of 100,000 disintegrations per minute per frisk.

The licensee continues with restrictions on oil processing and material movement and is performing material release surveys in low background radiation areas. Planned licensee actions include revisions to administrative controls, review of past offsite unconditional releases, improved physical controls for RPAs, and site cleanup.

The NRC resident inspectors and regional personnel are monitoring the licensee's investigation and corrective actions. The situation is being reviewed for possible enforcement action.

The State of Illinois will be informed. The information in this preliminary notification has been reviewed with licensee management.

Region III (Chicago) has responded to an news media inquiry on the contamination survey results.

This information is current as of 11 a.m. (CDT) on April 21, 1995.

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PDR I&E
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CONTACTS:

Thomas Kozak
708/829-9866

Pat Hiland
708/829-9603