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Telephone (617) 272-2000

23 March 1979

Director  
Office of Inspection and Enforcement  
US Nuclear Regulatory Commission  
Washington, DC 20555

Dear Sir:

This letter is a confirmation of a telephone conversation held on 21 March 1979 with Mr. John Glenn of USNRC, Region I, King of Prussia, PA. On that date, we informed Mr. Glenn of a potential problem as described below.

On 31 January 1979, the wipe test of an iridium-192 source manufactured in our facility revealed a significant amount of removable contamination. In the process of further checking this source, it was found to be improperly welded. This source did not leave our facility.

As a result of this finding, an examination of the welder was made, and the sources loaded that day were recalled. The examination of the welder revealed a fault which was immediately corrected. The sources which were loaded on that day and recalled were examined, and the source capsule welds were found to be satisfactory.

From these findings, it was determined that the problem was confined to this one source assembly. However, in order to test this determination, wipe test kits were sent to the owners of two hundred sources which were manufactured during December 1978 and January 1979. As of 19 March 1979, fifty nine of these two hundred sources had been wipe tested and analyzed. Fifty eight of these tests revealed less than 0.001 microcurie of removable contamination. One wipe test revealed the presence of 0.114 microcurie of iridium-192.

The source assembly which revealed the removable contamination was in the possession of the TEREK Division of General Motors Corporation, Hudson, OH.

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General Motors TEREX Division was notified of our findings on 19 March 1979 and was requested to remove the equipment involved from use. Two complete radiography systems were used with this source assembly.

On 22 March 1979, a Senior Radiological Technician from our facility went to the GM TEREX Division to package the equipment involved and to ship this equipment to our facility. Also on 22 March 1979, GM TEREX Division filed a report of this contaminated source with the USNRC.

At this point in time, we are not certain that the welder fault and this contaminated source are related. Further information in this regard will be available when this source assembly has been returned to our facility and examined.

If we can provide any additional information, please feel free to contact us.

Sincerely

  
John J. Mupiro III  
Technical Director

JJM/fb

xc: Director, OIE, Region I USNRC  
Mr. J. Glenn, OIE, Region I, USNRC  
Tech/Ops Isotope Committee

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