Date: January 4, 1980

PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION OF EVENT OR UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE--PNO-I-80-02

This preliminary notification constitutes EARLY notice of events of POSSIBLE safety or public interest significance. The information presented is as initially received without verification or evaluation and is basically all that is known by IE staff on this date.

Facility: Pittsburgh Testing Laboratory
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15220
License No. 37-00276-26

POOR ORIGINAL

Subject: POSSIBLE PERSONNEL OVEREXPOSURE

At 11:30 a.m. on January 4, 1980, the licensee's Radiation Safety Officer (RSO) called the Regional Office to report that the film badge for one employee had read 60.1 rem for the period November 13 to December 12, 1979. There had been only one identified occurrence during this period which had the possibility of producing an exposure of this magnitude. During the early morning hours of November 14, 1979, this employee was performing radiography in a cell at the licensee's home office. During a setup change he neglected to reconnect the source guide tube which resulted in the source becoming disconnected from the drive cable. However, he immediately recognized the situation, secured the cell and called the RSO. The RSO was able to return the source to the camera, receiving less than 200 millirem. The radiographer's pocket dosimeter read 40 millirem and he stated he had not entered the cell after the source became disconnected. Therefore, his film badge was not sent for emergency reading. The film badge was sent for routine evaluation and the film badge service promptly reported the high value. The licensee plans to employ a medical consultant to perform cytogenetic dosimetry and will investigate the possibility of other causes of the exposure.

Region I will conduct a special inspection the week of January 7, 1980. The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania has been informed. A press release will be considered following the special inspection.

Contact: J. Kinneman, 488-1342 (Prepared by Ext.) G. Smith, 488-1200 (Branch Chief Ext.)

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