

PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION OF EVENT OR UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE--PNO-I-89-93

This preliminary notification constitutes EARL' 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:
E.I. DuPont de Nemours & Co., Inc.
549 Albany Street
Boston, Massachusetts 02118
License No. 20-00000-21

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

30-28902

Subject: NICKEL-63 CONTAMINATION AT AN EMPLOYEE'S APARTMENT

In January and May 1989, the urinalysis for a worker in the licensee's nickel-plating laboratory indicated that the worker had an uptake of nickel-63 equivalent to 120 MPC-hours. Curie quantities of unsealed nickel-63 are processed in this laboratory. During an inspection on November 6-7, 1989, the inspector determined that weekly surveys performed by DuPont's radiation safety staff in the nickel-plating laboratory, indicated frequent nickel-63 contamination on the floor and other laboratory surfaces in excess of the licensee's limits. The inspector performed surveys which indicated that two of the employee's golf clubs were contaminated with approximately 500 disintegrations per minute (dpm) of nickel-63.

On November 20, 1989, DuPont took 98 removable contamination samples from the employees apartment in Derry, New Hampshire and 19 samples from his car. DuPont's analysis of the samples indicated removable nickel-63 contamination of 104 dpm on the glove compartment of the car, 208 dpm on one of his golf clubs and 159 dpm on a can of shaving cream in his apartment. In addition, an analysis of dust from the vacuum cleaner in the employees apartment indicated that the dust was contaminated with cobalt-57. DuPont is making additional radiological measurements of the dust. DuPont did not detect any external radiation levels in the employee's apartment or car above the normal background. DuPont has indicated that they will insure that the contaminated materials in the employees apartment and car will be decontaminated. Region I will continue to monitor the actions of the licensee.

The State of New Hampshire has been notified.

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