

RAZ

PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION OF EVENT OR UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE--PN59223 Date: July 8, 1992

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 Region V staff on this date.

FACILITY: Siemens Nuclear Power Corporation Richland, Washington  License No. SNM-1227 Docket No. 70-1257	Emergency Classification <input type="checkbox"/> Notification of Unusu Event <input type="checkbox"/> Alert <input type="checkbox"/> Site Area Emergency <input type="checkbox"/> General Emergency <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable
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SUBJECT: POTENTIAL DISPOSAL OF CONTAMINATED WASTE DRUMS IN A PUBLIC LANDFILL

At 9:00 am PDT on July 6, 1992, the NRC Region V office contacted the licensee regarding the licensee's disposal to a public landfill of clean sand blasting grit in used waste drums that may have been internally contaminated with low enriched uranium (LEU) (equal to or less than 5 percent U-235). The licensee informed Region V that it was in the process of investigating the matter. At 1:00 pm, the licensee informed Region V that its preliminary investigation disclosed that on July 2, 1992, an empty drum, intended for the disposal of the grit, was found to be contaminated with LEU (approximately 500,000 disintegrations per minute of removable LEU contamination on a large area wipe from the bottom of the barrel). This drum had not left the licensee's facility. However, on July 6, the licensee discovered that, about two weeks ago, 16 of 24 potentially contaminated drums that had previously been used to store unsorted radioactive waste, were used for the disposal of the grit without being internally surveyed.

On July 7, 1992, the licensee informed Region V that it was in the process of evaluating the potential amount of contamination that may have been in the 16 drums and the feasibility of recovering them from the public landfill.

A Region V inspector is being dispatched to the site to review the circumstances surrounding this event and the licensee's corrective actions.

NMSS and the State of Washington have been informed.

The licensee may issue a press release regarding this matter.

This information is current as of 1:00 pm PDT on July 8, 1992.

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PDR I&E  
PNO-V-92-023 PDR

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FAX TO:

Date: 07-08-92 Time: 2:00 PM PDT  
The Chairman  
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OPA  
LICENSEE  
INPO  
NSAC  
RESIDENT INSPECTOR  
HQS. OPERATION OFFICER  
PDR (202) 634-3343

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Revised: 04/08/92