

January 23, 1990

PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION OF EVENT OR UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE -- PNO-IV-90-05

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 IV staff on this date.

FACILITY: Sequoyah Fuels Corporation
Gore, Oklahoma

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

SUBJECT: NOTIFICATION OF CONTAMINATION EVENT

The licensee reported to the Region IV office that on January 22, 1990, a solenoid valve failure caused an in-plant spill of 10,000 to 20,000 pounds of depleted uranium tetrafluoride (UF₄) powder. The spill occurred when the nitrogen blanket on the powder bin caused the UF₄ powder to flow through the failed valve and the feed screw, filling and overflowing a collection bin. The spill occurred within the UF₆ to UF₄ facility and a small amount of the material apparently was released through the roof ventilation fans. Preliminary measurements indicated a maximum of 0.008 of the permissible contamination limit (MPC) at the licensee's fence.

One worker, who was present in the facility when the spill occurred, apparently inhaled or ingested a small amount of the material. The licensee's preliminary estimate, based on nose swabs, indicated an intake of 15 MPC-hours, compared to a permissible quarterly intake of 520 MPC-hours. Analyses of urine and fecal samples are being done to provide additional information about the employee's intake.

The NRC has dispatched an inspector from the URFO office to be on site January 24, 1990, to review the licensee's corrective actions and their evaluation of the potential offsite consequences of this event, if any.

The licensee has not issued a press release.

The state of Oklahoma has been informed.

Region IV received notification of this occurrence by telephone from the licensee at 12:30 p.m. on January 23, 1990. Region IV has informed NMSS.

This information has been confirmed with a licensee representative and is current as of 4 p.m., January 23, 1990.

CONTACT: William L. Fisher (FTS 728-8215) or Lawrence A. Yandell (FTS 728-8182).

RIV:D:DRSS
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(5520: 1/24/90 @ 8:05 a.m.
 Regions & HQ)