

PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION OF EVENT OR UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE--PNO-I-90-14

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 I staff on this date.

Facility:
Cintichem, Incorporated
Tuxedo, New York
Docket Number 050-54

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

Subject: RELEASES TO INDIAN KILL RESERVOIR

On December 12, 1989, NRC Region I received notification that the licensee had identified a possible discharge of slightly contaminated water through a storm drain in the onsite parking lot. However, sampling of all available surface and groundwater on site indicated no measurable contamination. In particular, an onsite holding pond which received water from the storm drain (and which itself drained to the Indian Kill reservoir) showed no detectable contamination. The NRC monitored the licensee's action throughout this period, and on January 5, 1990, NRC Region I instructed the licensee to release no water from the holding pond to the reservoir prior to sampling and analyzing the samples to ensure that no measurable release to the reservoir occurred. Until February 9, 1990, no measurable activity was observed in the holding pond. On February 9 activity (I-131 at nearly twice the maximum permissible concentration (MPC) and Na-24 and I-133 at levels somewhat less than the MPC) was measured in the holding pond. Following the discovery of radioactivity in the holding pond on February 9, 1990, all discharges to the reservoir were halted. The licensee began pumping the holding pond to onsite holding tanks and additional tanks that had been brought on site. The licensee processed this water and transferred it to another tank for sampling and analysis prior to discharge downstream of the reservoir.

During a reactive inspection on site from February 9 to February 16, 1990, an NRC inspection team closely observed the handling of the water from the holding pond, other onsite sources and releases from the site. As part of these activities, the NRC independently measured numerous samples from various onsite sources, processed water tanks, the holding pond and the reservoir itself to ensure an independent assessment of radioactivity in these samples and to verify the licensee's capability to accurately measure the radioactivity in the water. The NRC measurements verified that the licensee could correctly quantify the activity in the samples.

On February 20, 1990, the licensee informed NRC Region I that three discharges of holding pond water had been made to the reservoir on February 9, 1990, after sampling the discharge, but before analysis of the samples had been completed. These samples, when analyzed, indicated that the three discharges contained I-131, I-133 and Na-24. The licensee became aware of the holding pond contamination about 9:00 a.m. on February 9, 1990, after the third discharge and following the analysis of sample from the first discharge at 12:30 a.m. At that time the licensee terminated further discharges from the holding pond.

During the reactive team inspection, the licensee did not inform any NRC member of these three contaminated discharges. In meetings with the Tuxedo Town Board and a

6-00
11/23/90

DCS No: 070687891128
Date: February 22, 1990

PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION OF EVENT OR UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE--PNO-I-90-14

public Town Meeting, NRC and New York State representatives indicated they were unaware of any measurable activity discharged to the reservoir. Licensee representatives at these meetings did not correct these misunderstandings. It should be noted that no activity has been detected in the reservoir itself in samples analyzed by the NRC, New York State, the water company's contractor or the licensee.

The State of New York, the town of Tuxedo and Orange county, New York, officials have been informed of the information reported above. NRC Region I plans to issue a press release relative to this matter.

CONTACT: M. Austin
FTS 346-5390

DISTRIBUTION:

<u>OWFN</u>	<u>MNBB</u>	<u>L-St.</u>	<u>NL</u>	Mail: ADM:DMB
Chairman Carr	AEOD		RES	DOT:Trans only
Comm. Roberts	IRM	PDR		
Comm. Rogers	OIG			NRC Ops Ctr _____
Comm. Curtiss				
Comm. Remick				

CA	EDO	<u>Phillips</u>	INPO----
OGC	NMSS	ACRS	NSAC----
GPA	NRR		
PA	OE	Regional Offices _____	RI Resident Office _____
	SLITP		
	<u>EW</u>		Licensee: _____
	ASLAP		(Reactor Licensees)

Region I Form 83
(Rev. April 1988)

DISTRIBUTION:

1NRC1718

Chairman Carr

Comm Roberts

Comm Rogers

Comm Curtiss

Comm Remick

ACRS

CA

PDR

OGC-H

GPA

OIG

1NRC02/ORDAZ (Please make PA internal distribution)

1NRC1718/DAY (Please make internal Distribution)

1NRC1112/NRRPN (Please make NRR internal distribution)

1NRC0304,HILL (SLITP, please deliver to C. Kammerer)

1NRC0708,SUMMERS (OE, please deliver to J. Lieberman)

NRCRES,RESPN (Please make internal distribution)

NRCIE, LEADOP (Please make internal distribution)

NRCRII,RIIPN (Please make Internal RII distribution)

NRCRIII,RIIIPN (Please make Internal RIII distribution)

NRCRIV,Leadop (Please make Internal RIV distribution)

NRCRV,Leadop (Please make Internal RV distribution)

Region I WPS

Resident Office (Site PC) (If secretary is off FAX)

RI Office Services Section

(Mail to ADM:DMB & DOT (transportation only)

FAX to

INPO

NSAC