

Date: May 7, 1993

PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION OF EVENT OR UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE PN39324B

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 III staff on this date.

Facility: ALCOA
1600 Harvard Avenue
Cleveland, Ohio

Licensee Emergency Classification
 General Emergency
 Site Area Emergency
 Alert
 Unusual Event
Non-licensee N/A

Subject: PUBLIC EXIT MEETING IN NEWBURGH HEIGHTS, OHIO CONCERNING
NRC SURVEYS OF THE ALCOA AND CHEMETRON VICINITY

On May 7, 1993, NRC-Region III held an exit meeting in Newburgh Heights, Ohio, with representatives of Chemetron and the Mayor of Newburgh Heights. The Ohio Department of Health participated in the exit meeting. Attendees at the meeting included Congressman Martin R. Hoke of Ohio, representatives of Ohio Senators John Glenn and Howard Metzenbaum, and a State of Ohio representative.

During the meeting, NRC representatives presented the results of surveys conducted in the area on May 4-7, 1993. The surveys included eight residences and 15 commercial and industrial sites in the vicinity of the Chemetron site. Two of the homes surveyed revealed radiation levels above background; however, the source of the radiation was determined to be potassium-40, a naturally occurring source of radiation. All other survey results in residential areas were negative. A small amount of contamination was found in soil near a fence that was adjacent to the Chemetron facility. The levels of contamination that were identified do not represent a health hazard to individuals and are less than the NRC's criteria for release of areas for unrestricted use. Samples of the contaminated area were collected, however, and will undergo further analysis.

The NRC decided to conduct independent surveys of the area after the Aluminum Corporation of America (ALCOA) notified the NRC that it had identified radioactive contamination on the roof of one of its buildings (Bldg. 65) which is adjacent to the Chemetron facility. The ALCOA site is currently undergoing remediation due to the presence of radioactive contamination from past operations. The source of the contaminant on the roof, however, was depleted uranium from the Chemetron site. ALCOA's finding generated public and media interest, and concern over possible contamination in a nearby residential area.

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The NRC on May 3 issued a letter to Chemetron requesting them to prepare a survey plan for offsite areas by May 28. Additionally, on May 6, the NRC approved ALCOA's plan to clean up Bldg. 65's roof where the contamination was found earlier.

There has been local media coverage of this situation and local media covered the exit meeting.

The State of Ohio was notified of the meeting.

This information is current as of 4:00 p.m. CDT on May 7, 1993.

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