

Date: May 6, 1993

PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION OF EVENT OR UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE PN39328

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:	<u>Licensee Emergency Classification</u>
Illinois Department of	<input type="checkbox"/> General Emergency
Nuclear Safety	<input type="checkbox"/> Site Area Emergency
Springfield, Illinois	<input type="checkbox"/> Alert
	<input type="checkbox"/> Unusual Event
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A

Subject: RADIOACTIVE SOURCES FOUND IN CHICAGO RESIDENCE

On May 4, 1993, the Illinois Department of Nuclear Safety (IDNS) was notified that containers labelled as containing radioactive material had been found in a residence in Chicago. The residence had belonged to a physicist at the University of Chicago who died several years ago. The material was found as the home was being cleaned prior to its sale.

An IDNS health physicist was dispatched to the home. He found a homemade lead-lined safe in the basement containing 13 radioactive sources. Several labels on the sources were dated in the 1950s. Most of the sources had decayed to background levels. The highest measurement found was at contact on a metal disk labelled as cesium-137 which measured 120 millirem per hour.

The sources were removed by IDNS for disposal. Once the sources were removed, IDNS and representatives from the University of Chicago Radiation Safety Office performed radiation surveys in the residence and in the vehicles being used to removed the contents of the home. The surveys identified no residual contamination.

There has been local news media interest in this situation. The information in this preliminary notification has been reviewed by IDNS.

The National Emergency Response Center notified the NRC Operations Center of this incident at 8:11 p.m. (CDT) on May 4, 1993. Additional information was obtained from the Illinois Department of Nuclear Safety on May 5. This information is current as of 9 a.m. on May 6, 1993.

CONTACT:

James Lynch	Roland Lickus
708/790-5669	708/790-5666

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