

PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION OF EVENT OR UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE PNO-III-94-15A

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.

<u>Facility</u>	<u>Licensee Emergency Classification</u>	<i>WJD</i>
Cleveland Fire Department	General Emergency	
Cleveland, Ohio	Site Area Emergency	
	Alert	
Non-licensee	Unusual Event	
	X Not Applicable	

Subject: POSSIBLE MISSING RADIOACTIVE SOURCE (UPDATE)

Beginning on March 18, 1994, NRC Region III (Chicago) assisted the Cleveland Fire Department and other state and local agencies responding to the discovery of the container. The response focused on the ownership of the container, surveys to assure that there was no unshielded radiation source in the area, and the identity of several children seen playing with the container.

Region III personnel in Cleveland included the Chief, State and Government Affairs, and three radiation specialists. They participated in two news conferences held by the Cleveland Fire Department on March 18, 1994, and in a followup news conference on March 19. On March 18, the NRC personnel performed a radiation survey of the neighborhood where the empty container was discovered.

On March 19, teams of Fire Department personnel and radiation specialists from the NRC, the county, and the state canvassed the neighborhood, seeking the identity of the children and performing radiation surveys. None of the radiation surveys identified any contamination or any evidence of a radiation source.

The children have not been identified. The Fire Department conducted an assembly at a grade school in the area on March 21 to seek any information about the container and the children seen playing with it. No additional information was obtained as a result of this effort.

On the afternoon of March 21, 1994, Cleveland Fire Department personnel and a Region III radiation specialist interviewed three employees at Sam Katz & Company, an NRC licensee and scrap dealer in Cleveland, concerning the empty shielded storage and transport container. The employees reported that they found the container at their business location during the week of March 7. The company occasionally finds unsolicited scrap items left at their facility. The company has appropriate radiation monitoring equipment and surveyed the container. They determined it was empty. Because they had no use for the container, the employees stated that they moved the device down the street to the location where it was discovered by a passerby and reported to the fire department on March 16, 1994. Based on the employees' statements, it appears that the container was empty when the children were seen playing with it.

An NRC radiation specialist is in Cleveland to continue the review of the circumstances surrounding the finding of the container.

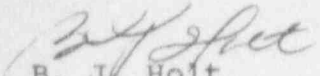
Region III staffed its Incident Response Center and entered the Monitoring

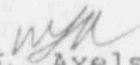
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Mode on March 18, 1994. The NRC Operations Center was also staffed. This monitoring mode continued until about 6 p.m. (CST) on March 19. The Commissioner's Assistants were briefed on March 18 and March 19.

This information is current as of 10 a.m. on March 22, 1994.

CONTACT:

  
B. J. Holt  
708/829-9836

  
W. L. Axelson  
708/829-9800