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for WLA

PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION OF EVENT OR UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE PNO-III-94-16

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>
Commonwealth Edison Co.	General Emergency
Zion 1 & 2	Site Area Emergency
Zion, Illinois	Alert
	Unusual Event
Docket Nos. 50-295, 50-304	X Not Applicable

Subject: NEWS MEDIA INTEREST IN CONTAMINATION OF WORKER'S CLOTHING

On March 15, 1994, a contract employee was found to have particle-sized cobalt-60 contamination in his pant pocket when he reported for work at the plant. The worker has performed decontamination of equipment during the current dual-unit refueling and modification outage. The particle was discovered during a whole body count at the beginning of the work day, which was performed because of previous clothing contamination experienced by the individual on March 13 and 14, 1994.

On March 13, 1994, the worker triggered a contamination alarm on exiting the gate house. The worker had minor contamination on his neck and showered to remove the contamination. He dressed in his street clothes and successfully passed through the radiation monitor leaving the radiologically controlled area, but triggered the alarm a second time on the radiation monitor in the gate house. He was surveyed by radiation technicians who detected no contamination on his clothing. He put on a paper suit, put his clothes in a bag, and, holding the bag, successfully passed through the gatehouse radiation monitor twice prior to going home.

On March 14, 1994, the worker again triggered a contamination alarm on exiting the radiologically controlled area. Radiation technicians detected a radioactive particle on the worker's sweatshirt, removed the particle, and he was released to go home.

As a result of the March 15 contamination, the licensee asked to check the worker's clothing and his hotel room. Three other items of clothing were found to be contaminated. The contamination levels ranged from 600 disintegrations per minute to 24,000 disintegrations per minute. These contamination levels are low level and would not represent a health and safety hazard to the worker or the public.

There was no other contamination detected in the room and none found in the worker's car. At the request of the individual, an NRC radiation specialist observed the room and clothing survey. The clothing was taken by the licensee and the worker reimbursed.

The licensee has checked the calibration on their radiation monitors and found them to be properly calibrated. The radiation protection staff is currently performing a sensitivity study of the radiation monitoring equipment using actual contamination in different configurations to assess the sensitivity to contamination in various positions. The licensee is reviewing contamination data on about 10 other individuals performing

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similar decontamination work. No trends or problems have been identified. The licensee is continuing to evaluate the worker's work environment and work practices.

The NRC radiation specialist is reviewing the licensee's response to this situation.

There has been some news media interest in this situation in Michigan where the individual lives.

The State of Illinois has been notified. The information in this preliminary notification has been reviewed by licensee management.

Region III (Chicago) learned of the news media coverage of this situation about 4:00 p.m. (CST) on March 22, 1994. This information is current as of 4:00 p.m. on March 23, 1994.

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