

PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION OF EVENT OR UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE--PNO-V-90-42B Date: Nov. 8, 1990

This preliminary notification constitutes EARLY notice of events of POSSIBLE safety or public interest significance. The information presented is as initially received without verification or evaluation and is basically all that is known by Region V staff on this date.

FACILITY: Veterans Administration Medical Center
3350 La Jolla Village
San Diego, California
License No. 04-15030-01

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

DOCKET NO. ³⁰ ~~04~~-08456

SUBJECT: CONTAMINATION OF HOSPITAL LABORATORIES AND PUBLIC AREAS (UPDATE)

The VAMC, San Diego notified Region 5 on November 7, 1990, that a resurvey performed by the licensee at a researcher's home identified three small areas of floor contamination, ranging up to 200,000 disintegrations per minute (dpm). Although this activity is several times higher than previously reported levels, it would not likely result in any significant radiological dose. The licensee will be performing more thorough resurveys in other researchers' homes that were previously surveyed on November 2. As of late November 7th, the licensee had not yet identified the cause or exact time of the contamination event. Region V has informed the State of California of the additional contamination findings and of the fact that the above mentioned researcher uses public transportation to go to and from work.

The licensee has obtained additional health physics expertise from other VA Medical Centers, the University of California, and the San Diego County Department of Health. The latter is performing contamination surveys of the buses traveling the route used by the above mentioned researcher. Blood and urine samples from VA personnel are being collected and analyzed for radioactivity by the licensee.

Region V issued a Confirmatory Action Letter on November 6, confirming that licensed activities have been discontinued in the oncology research laboratories (these are the affected laboratories) pending an investigation and identification of corrective actions. The licensee is to review findings and action with NRC by November 30, 1990.

News media interest continues.

This Preliminary Notification is issued for information only and is current as of 12:30 PM, (PST), November 8, 1990.

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