

April 13, 1994

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PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION OF EVENT OR UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE PNO-II-94-021

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 II staff on this date.

Facility

Agreement State Licensee
Florida Steel
Jackson, Tennessee

Licensee Emergency Classification

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

Subject: Elevated Radiation Levels in Flue Dust

On April 12, 1994, the NRC was informed of an event that occurred at Florida Steel, an agreement state licensee in the State of Tennessee.

On April 6, 1994 Florida Steel notified the State of Tennessee that two trucks carrying flue dust were detected with elevated radiation levels by radiation monitors located on site. The trucks were exiting the site following removal of the flue dust from baghouses.

Samples of flue dust indicate that it is contaminated with cesium-137 to levels between 1.5 to 40 picocuries per gram. The contamination appears to have come from the smelting of a fixed gauge between February and April 1994, however, Florida Steel has not been able to determine the source. Contamination has also been detected in the flue dust hopper and baghouse but not in the product steel, the ARC furnace or the surrounding environment.

The facility is currently shutdown. Florida Steel will obtain the services of a contractor to decontaminate the facility.

Tennessee inspectors have responded to the site and the State is continuing to evaluate the situation.

Florida Steel informed local media of the contamination event.

This information is current as of 11:00 a.m. on Wednesday April 13, 1994.

Contact: Richard L. Woodruff
(404)331-5553

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