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PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION OF EVENT OR UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE PNO-III-94-40

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>
Syncor International Corp.	General Emergency
Kansas City, Missouri	Site Area Emergency
	Alert
License No. 24-16617-01MD	Unusual Event
	X Not Applicable

Subject: INTENTIONAL SPREAD OF CONTAMINATION OUTSIDE FACILITY

On May 18, 1994, a staff member of the licensee's nuclear pharmacy observed a nuclear pharmacist use a syringe filled with technetium-99m pertechnetate to spray the radiopharmaceutical on two mating butterflies outside the licensee's facility. The incident was apparently a practical joke.

The licensee personnel captured the two butterflies and placed them in a plastic baggy in their facility. Radiation measurements indicated that about 5 millicuries (185 MBq) had been sprayed on the two butterflies. An additional 100 microcuries (3700 KBq) was detected on the bush where the butterflies were sprayed. The licensee posted a guard at the contaminated area. No personnel were contaminated.

Technetium-99m has a half-life of 6 hours. It is used in medical diagnostic studies with a typical dose of 5 to 20 millicuries (185-740 MBq).

The licensee has suspended the employee pending possible termination.

Region III (Chicago) is reviewing the matter for possible further action.

NMSS and the State of Missouri have been notified. The information in this preliminary notification has been reviewed with licensee management.

Region III was notified of this incident at 1:30 p.m. on May 19, 1994. This information is current as of 8:30 a.m. (CDT), May 20, 1994.

CONTACT:

D. Jones
John D. Jones
708/829-9832

B. J. Holt
B. J. Holt
708/829-9836

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