

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 staff on this date.

Facility: New England Nuclear Corp.
Boston, Massachusetts
Lic. No. 20-00320-19

30-13288

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

Subject: 100 MILLICURIE SHIPMENT OF Xe-133 VIALS CRUSHED AT THE SHIPPERS' TERMINAL, O'HARE FIELD, CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

Personnel at the Flying Tigers Air Terminal, O'Hare Field, Chicago, IL found two lead tubes (shields), properly labeled, containing capsules of xenon-133 for medical diagnostic use. Each capsule contained a nominal 20 mCi of xenon-133. One lead tube containing five capsules had apparently been run over by a fork-lift truck on the outside loading dock and the five capsules were crushed. Because xenon-133 is a noble gas and diffused into the air, there is no health hazard from this incident. The second lead tube was not damaged and the contained capsule of 20 mCi of xenon-133 was intact. No other packing material or invoices could be found.

The lead tube shields and capsules of xenon were part of a shipment to Tai Pei, Taiwan, China from New England Nuclear Corporation, Boston, Massachusetts (NEN). The shipment left Boston, MA on March 11, 1983, and arrived in Chicago, IL between 1:30 and 2:00 a.m. on March 12, 1983. The lead tubes (shields) containing the xenon-133 were found before 9:00 a.m. on March 14, 1983, with their lids in place and security seal still affixed. The licensee, NEN, has contacted Taiwan, China and has verified that the rest of the shipment has been received. Both lead tubes and contents have been retrieved by the NEN Midwestern Regional District Manager and are at their facility in Schiller Park, IL.

The State of Illinois has been notified.

The licensee does not plan to issue a news release.

Region III was first notified of this event by the licensee on March 14, 1983. This information is current as of 4:00 p.m. (CST), March 14, 1983.

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