

March 30, 1983

PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION OF EVENT OR UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE -- PNO-IV-83-10B

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 NRC staff on this date.

FACILITY: Gulf Nuclear, Inc.
Webster, Texas
(Texas Agreement
State Licensee)

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

SUBJECT: EXPOSURE TO AMERICIUM-241

This is to provide an update on the americium-241 exposure incident involving Gulf Nuclear, Inc., a Texas licensee.

On March 25, 1983, the licensee filed a lawsuit against the Texas Health Department (and Department officials) for improperly suspending Gulf Nuclear's radioactive materials license on March 21, 1983. (Under Texas law, a license may not be suspended until after a hearing is held.) The State corrected this technicality on March 28, 1983, by issuing an emergency order to cease radioactive material handling operations at the Webster facility.

Also, on March 28, 1983, the Texas Attorney General filed a lawsuit asking for fines of \$25,000 for each violation and for each day of violation. Violations cited in the suit included: (1) shipments of radioactive materials on commercial passenger flights to Mexico during 1980 and 1981, (2) cesium-137 soil contamination within the Webster facility, and (3) possession of radioactive material in excess of that allowed in the license. The Attorney General has "closed" the licensee's files at the Bureau of Radiation Control while any litigation is pending.

There continues to be strong media interest concerning this matter.

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Licensee: _____
(Reactor Licensees)

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3/30 faxed to Comm. for dispatch 8:45