

PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION OF EVENT OR UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE PN1-9450

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 I staff on this date.

Facility:
Department of the Treasury
U.S. Customs Service
1301 Constitution Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20229

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

Docket No.: 030-12771
License No.: 08-17447-01
Event No.: N/A
Event Location Code: MAT

SUBJECT: APPARENT LOSS OF A DENSITY GAUGE CONTAINING 100 MICROCURIES OF BA-133

At 2:45 p.m. on September 19, 1994, the U.S. Customs Service, Washington, D.C., notified the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission Region I(NRC) that an approximately 100 microcurie barium-133 (Ba-133) sealed source in a Campbell Security Equipment Company Model K portable density gauge was lost from the port of entry in Calexico, California, where it was being used. Barium-133 has a half-life of about 7 years. With the shutter in the On/Open position, the radiation level at 5 cm would be approximately 0.5 mR/hr from this source. The Model K series density gauge is a hand held device, 140 mm x 60 mm x 65 mm (5.5" x 2.4" x 2.5"). The licensee reported that the serial number of the gauge is SN 3384-1. The gauge had been put into service on August 8, 1993. The licensee stated that the gauge was of a newer design with more sensitive detection capabilities than the older Model K which uses a 1 millicurie barium 133 source. The licensee placed the call to the NRC to verify reporting requirements, and that this incident is not reportable. The licensee contacted Campbell Security Equipment Company, and is continuing to conduct inquiries and more intensified inspections of vehicles returning through customs.

This PN is current as of 4:30 p.m. on September 19, 1994.

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PDR I&E
PNO-I-94-050 PDR

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