

November 3, 1998

PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION OF EVENT OR UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE PNO-III-98-052

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 Region III staff (Lisle, Illinois) on this date.

Facility  
Syncor International, Inc.  
Syncor International, Inc.  
Woodland Hill, California  
License No: 04-26507-01MD

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

Subject: RADIOISOTOPE GENERATOR RECEIVED WITH RADIATION LEVEL ABOVE LIMIT

On October 30, 1998, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts reported that one of its licensees, Dupont, had received a molybdenum 99/technetium-99m generator from the Syncor Nuclear Pharmacy in Valley View, Ohio, with a radiation level above the Department of Transportation limit. Dupont reported that the external radiation level on the surface of the package was measured at 250 millirem per hour. The Department of Transportation limit for such shipments is 200 millirem per hour. The radiation level at 1 meter from the surface of the package was 5.0 millirem per hour, according to Dupont. Dupont also stated that the Transportation Index (TI) listed on the Yellow III package was 1.7 millirem per hour. The package containing the generator was sent by the nuclear pharmacy on October 26 and received by Dupont on October 30.

Dupont also reported that there was apparent damage on the bottom of the package and that there was radioactive contamination on the interior of the package. The generator was being returned to Dupont from the nuclear pharmacy because of a malfunction.

Dupont is investigating the cause of the excessive radiation level and the package damage.

Region II (Chicago) notified Region IV (Dallas) of the incident because the NRC license is issued to the Syncor corporate office in California. The Commonwealth of Massachusetts has also informed Region I (Philadelphia) of the incident. The NRC staff will review the incident during the next inspection of the Syncor facility.

The State of Ohio will be informed by Region III. The information in this preliminary notification has been reviewed with licensee management, and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

Region III was notified of this shipping incident by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts on October 30, 1998. This information is current as of 10 a.m. on November 2, 1998.

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