

DCS: 999900001/861126
Date: November 26, 1986

PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION OF EVENT OR UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE--PNO-I-86-93

This preliminary notification constitutes EARLY notice of events of POSSIBLE safety or public interest significance. This information has been confirmed with the General Services Administration by NRC Region I personnel.

Facility: U.S. General Services
Administration
Watertown, Massachusetts
(non-licensee)

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

Subject: Cleanup of Depleted Uranium Residue From Previous U.S. Army Arsenal Site

The General Services Administration has initiated action to clean up a small deposit of residual oxidized depleted uranium at a site previously associated with the U.S. Army's Watertown Arsenal Complex. The area was previously decontaminated by the Army and declared suitable for unrestricted use by the Atomic Energy Commission in 1974. However, current criteria and standards necessitate further cleanup efforts.

About 65 square feet of area within a security fence is involved. A comprehensive radiological survey of the area performed by the Department of Energy in 1981 generally characterized the extent and degree of depleted uranium contamination and indicated general area dose rates of about 30 to 40 microroentgens per hour and soil concentration of about 26,000 picocuries of depleted uranium per gram. Such radiological measurements are in excess of current NRC criteria which specifies 10 microroentgens per hour at one meter from the ground surface and 35 picocuries of depleted uranium per gram of soil. The survey results were made available to the NRC, EPA and Massachusetts Department of Health in April 1986. Subsequently, GSA has elected to apply for a license for the site and initiate action to develop a decontamination plan sufficient to release the area for unrestricted use.

GSA intends to announce this intention to the Watertown Town Council and various state and federal congressional and senatorial representatives by letter. The Region I Public Affairs Office is prepared to handle media inquiries.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts has been informed. This PN is for information only.

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