

June 16, 1987

PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION OF EVENT OR UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE PNO-II-87-39

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 II staff on this date.

FACILITY: ATEC Associates of Virginia
License No: 45-16546-02
Alexandria, VA

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

SUBJECT: LOST OR STOLEN TROXLER GAUGE

The licensee notified Region I that a Troxler soil density gauge is missing and presumed stolen after being left unattended beside a vehicle overnight the evening of June 12, 1987. The instrument disappeared at a job site near Oakton, Virginia, where Highway 123 intersects I-66.

The source rod was not locked in place because the gauge operator had locked her vehicle keys with the gauge case and rod padlock inside her vehicle. The missing gauge was later thought to have been placed inside a site trailer, but a weekend search was unsuccessful in finding the gauge.

The dose rate to an individual moving the source rod from its gauge housing would be approximately 25 rem per hour at one centimeter from the tip of the extended source rod. Shielded, the maximum dose rate is about 15 millirem per hour. The gauge contains eight millicuries of cesium-137, 40 millicuries of americium-241 and beryllium.

The gauge itself measures about 9 inches wide, and 18 inches long with a source rod handle sticking up some 24 inches above the top.

The licensee has notified the Fairfax County, Virginia, sheriff.

Region II has issued a news release asking local media outlets to publish precautions for anyone finding the device. Area media interest is expected.

The licensee delayed notifying the NRC because it was thought the gauge was in the possession of another contractor.

The Commonwealth of Virginia has been informed.

The NRC (Region II) received initial notification of this event by telephone from the licensee at 2:15 p.m. (EDT) on June 16.

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PDR I&E
PNO-II-87-039 PDR

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RT-9:30, RA-9:30, RW-9:37, RV-9:40
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