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ROCKETDYN CNPK



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July 26, 1989

In reply refer to 89RC-08861

Mr. R. J. Pate, Chief  
Nuclear Materials Safety and  
Safeguards Branch  
U. S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission  
Region V  
1450 Maria Lane, Suite 210  
Walnut Creek, California 94596-5368

Dear Mr. Pate:

This letter discusses an occurrence in which our operations failed to fully comply with Commission regulations.

On May 12, 1989, New Brunswick Laboratories (a DOE facility located at Argonne National Laboratory, Argonne, Illinois) shipped a package to us, containing a small amount of plutonium (5 grams) and a somewhat larger amount of depleted uranium (75 grams). The package was received at our dock on May 18 and immediately stored in the radioactive material temporary storage cabinet in our receiving warehouse. The receiving clerk started to implement the procedure to notify Radiation and Nuclear Safety of the receipt of this package and request a receiving radiation survey, but was interrupted and thus failed to complete the call. The package remained in the storage cabinet, unsurveyed, until it was located on June 8 as a result of a search initiated when it was determined that the package had been shipped but had not been delivered to the user. Thus, the receiving survey required by 10CFR20.205(c)(1), to be performed within 3 hours after receipt, was not performed within the required time.

The survey was performed on June 8 after the package was found in the storage cabinet. No radiation above background was measured.

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We have re-emphasized the need for material receiving clerks to immediately request a receiving survey as soon as a radioactive materials package is received. Reminders of this requirement will be periodically presented at staff meetings of our Receiving Department.

We believe that these actions will prevent a recurrence of this problem.

Very truly yours,

R. T. Lancet, Director  
Nuclear Safety & Licensing Office

cc: Mr. K. S. Wong, State of California, Dept. of  
Industrial Relations, Div. of Occupational Safety and  
Health, Radiation Health Unit, 6150 Van Nuys Blvd., Room  
310, Van Nuys, CA 91401-3333

Mr. W. W. Warner, U. S. Dept. of Energy, San Francisco  
Operations Office, Nuclear Safety and Quality  
Assurance, 1333 Broadway, Oakland, CA 94612