

PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION

November 27, 1978

PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION OF SAFEGUARDS EVENT--

PNS-78-57

This preliminary notification constitutes EARLY notice of events of POSSIBLE national security or public interest significance. The information presented is as initially received without verification or evaluation and is basically all that is known by IE staff as of this date.

FACILITY: Comanche Peak Steam Electric Station, Units 1 & 2
Texas Utilities Generating Company (DNs 50-445 and 50-446)
Somerville, Texas

SUBJECT: Explosion at Reactor Construction Site

At 7:30 p.m. on November 26, 1978, the TUGCO Plant Superintendent, Operations, notified RIV (Arlington) of an explosion in the Common Auxiliary Building in a Brown and Root QC/Craft field office. He stated that the explosion, caused by an explosive device, occurred at approximately 4:30 p.m. on November 26, 1978. He further stated that the explosion destroyed a file cabinet but there had been no structural damage to the building, no fire and no one had been injured.

The licensee notified the local sheriff's office and a bomb squad from Waco, Texas was alerted.

The Resident Inspector called the RIV office at 7:45 a.m. on November 27, 1978, to report later findings. He reported, that according to the B&R Project Manager and the TUGCO Resident Manager, the explosion had been caused by a leaking butane bottle. The leaking bottle and several other bottles were stored in Room #168 of the Common Auxiliary Building on the Unit No. 2 side. An explosive concentration resulted from the leakage and was apparently ignited by temporarily rigged quartz halide lights.

The Dallas office of the FBI was notified on November 26, 1978, and the local Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms was notified on November 27, 1978, by the RIV staff. Both were apprised of the later findings on November 27, 1978.

No press release was made or is planned by the licensee or the NRC.

The site construction progress is currently reported as 60 percent completed. There is no SNM on site.

The IAT was notified.

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