



NRC NEWS

Office of Public Affairs, Region IV
Arlington, TX. 76011-4511
www.nrc.gov



No: IV-20-021
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October 21, 2020

NRC Issues Violation to International Isotopes Inc. Related to 2019 Contamination Incident

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission has issued two violations to International Isotopes Inc., of Idaho Falls, Idaho, that stem from a 2019 contamination event in Seattle.

The NRC determined that the company's failure to properly review and approve changes to operating procedures prior to implementation violated its NRC license. These procedures were used by International Isotopes staff and directly contributed to a significant radiological contamination event at the University of Washington's Harborview Medical Center in Seattle on May 2, 2019.

The NRC identified the violations during an inspection of International Isotopes in February and outlined them in a June 22 [inspection report](#). A pre-decisional enforcement conference was held with the licensee on Aug. 4 to discuss the findings, their significance and root causes, as well as the licensee's corrective actions.

In a [Notice of Violation](#) issued on Oct. 20, the NRC assessed the violations collectively as a Severity Level II problem, the second highest of four severity levels in the agency's enforcement policy. Although there were no personnel overexposures in the Seattle event, the NRC determined that an overexposure could have occurred under slightly different circumstances.

International Isotopes Inc. promptly took several corrective steps following the Seattle event, including halting all field service operations and applying to amend its NRC license to remove authorization to conduct field service activities. The agency granted that license amendment on May 21. Granting credit for these corrective actions, the NRC exercised enforcement discretion and did not propose to issue a civil penalty for the Severity Level II matter.

The licensee is required to respond to the Notice of Violation within 30 days.