

November 12, 1999

**PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION OF EVENT OR UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE PNO-IV-99-054**

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 Region IV staff in Arlington, Texas on this date.

<b><u>Facility</u></b>	<b><u>Licensee Emergency Classification</u></b>
Agreement State Licensee	Notification of Unusual Event
Colorado Eng. & Instrumentation	Alert
3811 North 34th St.	Site Area Emergency
Phoenix, Arizona 85017	General Emergency
License No: AZ7-457	X Not Applicable

Subject: STOLEN PORTABLE MOISTURE/DENSITY GAUGE

On November 11, 1999, the Arizona Radiation Regulatory Agency (ARRA) was notified by Colorado Engineering and Instrumentation (CE&I), an ARRA licensee, to report the theft of one of their portable nuclear gauges.

The licensee reported that a Campbell Pacific Nuclear, Model MC Series gauge (S/N MD-90204820), containing approximately 1,850 megabecquerels (50 millicuries) of americium-241 and approximately 370 megabecquerels (10 millicuries) of cesium-137, was stolen from a licensee vehicle parked at a temporary job-site in Phoenix, Arizona. The licensee reported that the gauge had been stored in its approved transportation container and was chained (locked) to the bed of the vehicle. After returning to the vehicle at approximately 10:00 a.m. on November 11, a CE&I gauge user observed that the chain and shipping container had been manipulated to allow access to the contents of the shipping container. The gauge, all associated equipment and documentation had been stolen. The Phoenix Police Department has been notified and is investigating the theft. CE&I is offering a \$500 reward for the return of the gauge and ARRA issued a press release on November 12, 1999.

ARRA is obtaining additional information and will continue to monitor the licensee's efforts to recover the device.

ARRA notified the FBI, NRC, Mexico, and the States of California, Colorado, Nevada, New Mexico and Utah.

Region IV has informed OSP, NMSS and the I.A.T.

This information has been discussed with the State of Arizona and is current as of 3:00 p.m. on November 12, 1999.

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