

March 4, 1999

PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION OF EVENT OR UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE PNO-I-99-012

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 I staff (King of Prussia, Pennsylvania) on this date.

Facility

INTERNATIONAL PAPER, INC.
International Paper, Inc.
South Highland St.
P. O. Box 268
Lock Haven, Pennsylvania 17745
Dockets: 99990001 License No: General Lic

Licensee Emergency Classification

Notification of Unusual Event
Alert
Site Area Emergency
General Emergency
X Not Applicable

Subject: LOST GENERALLY LICENSED GAUGE

On March 2, 1999, International Paper, Inc. (IP), discovered, and informed the NRC, that a source housing containing 80 millicuries of americium 241 could not be located. The source housing is from a generally licensed NDC Systems Model 104 fixed gauge that was used by the licensee to measure the water content of paper fiber slurry at their Lock Haven, Pennsylvania facility. The entire gauge was shipped in one package to the manufacturer for service in February 1997. In March 1997, according to the manufacturer, the gauge was shipped back to the facility in two packages, one of which contained the radioactive source. The licensee controlled one of the packages that contained non-radioactive components of the gauge as if it contained the radioactive source. On March 2, 1999, the licensee opened this package with the intention of reinstalling the gauge and discovered that the package contained part of the gauge, but not the radioactive source. The licensee has initiated a search for the second package which is presumed to contain the source housing with the 80 millicurie americium 241 source.

The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania has been notified of this event.

All information is current as of March 4, 1999 at 9:30 a.m.

The Public Affairs Office is available to respond to inquiries.

Region I will continue to follow this incident.

Contact: Eric Reber
(610)337-5276

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