

December 7, 1999

PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION OF EVENT OR UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE PNO-I-99-053

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 in King of Prussia, Pennsylvania on this date.

Facility

Pennsylvania State University  
Pennsylvania State University  
University Park, Pennsylvania  
Dockets: 99990001 License No: General Licen

Licensee Emergency Classification

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

Subject: LOSS OR THEFT OF SELF-LUMINESCENT EXIT SIGNS CONTAINING TRITIUM

The Radiation Safety Officer of Pennsylvania State University notified Region I on December 6, 1999, that six to eight exit signs containing hydrogen 3 (tritium) were missing from their campus located in New Kensington, Pennsylvania. The signs were apparently installed in July, 1989, and were noted missing from the installed location by licensee's personnel in 1997. The RSO stated that he was not made aware of the missing signs until November 9, 1999.

The RSO informed Region I on December 7, 1999, that the licensee is conducting an investigation of the event, and a 30-day report of the event will be sent to the NRC, as required by 10 CFR 20.2201.

The notification stated that the missing signs were manufactured by Perm-Ex Mnfg., and were of series P-160, Model T-4001. However, Region I determined that the exit signs described by the licensee are manufactured and distributed by NRD, Inc., located in Grand Island, NY. The RSO of NRD, Inc. stated that each of these exit signs may contain as much as 20 curies of tritium. NRD, Inc. is searching its records to determine how many such signs were sold to Pennsylvania State University to be installed at its New Kensington Campus.

This information is current as of 10:30 a.m., December 7, 1999. Region I is continuing its follow up of the event.

The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania has been informed of the event. Region I is prepared to respond to inquiries by the media.

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