

November 9, 2000

PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION OF EVENT OR UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE PNO-II-2000-0047

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 II staff (Atlanta, Georgia) on this date.

Facility

Design Fuels Corporation
(Non-Licensee)
McKeesport, PA
Dockets:

Licensee Emergency Classification

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

Subject: GENERALLY LICENSED DEVICE FOUND

The Alabama Office of Radiation Control responded to a report that a radioactive device had been found on private property near Hueytown, AL on November 7, 2000. The device was determined to be a Texas Nuclear Corporation gauge with the shutter locked in an open position. The device was located in a wooded area, away from personnel, and not accessible to the general public. A consultant physicist conducted radiation surveys, closed and locked the shutter, and moved the device to a secure location. These actions and surveys were confirmed by the Office of Radiation Control personnel.

The device was manufactured by the Texas Nuclear Corporation, model number TN-5191, serial number B-1806, containing 1 curie of cesium-137 in 1982. Maximum radiation readings were 2.6 rem per hour with the shutter open, and 1.8 millirem per hour with the shutter closed. The source was determined not to be leaking radioactive contamination.

The device was initially distributed to the Tailings Processing Company in McMurray, PA that went bankrupt. The equipment was subsequently purchased by Design Fuels Corporation in McKeesport, PA and moved to Alabama in the early 1990's. The device is believed to have been at the Hueytown, AL location since early 1992. The Office of Radiation Control is continuing their evaluation of the incident. The NRC Region I office has been notified and is assisting in tracing the device.

Region II received initial notification of this recovery from the State of Alabama at 4:11 p.m. on Wednesday, November 8, 2000. This information is current as of 11:00 a.m., November 9, 2000.

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