



**UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
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FOR THE RECORD

**PROTECTION AND SECURITY OF
HIGH-ACTIVITY RADIOACTIVE SOURCES**

A recent story about the Department of Energy National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) recovery of two irradiators with radioactive cesium-137 sources from a company in New Jersey gave the mistaken impression that the sources were unsecured and therefore posed a significant threat to the public. The fact is, these sources were subject to enhanced federal and state regulatory security requirements and public health and safety were protected at all times. The devices were stored securely until they could be picked up by the NNSA's Global Threat Reduction Initiative Off-site Source Recovery Project (GTRI/OSRP) for disposal as scheduled. The GTRI/OSRP routinely collects radioactive sources no longer being used from companies licensed by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission or a state, as requested by licensees or regulators.

Security and control of radioactive materials is a top priority for the NRC. The NRC has a rigorous security program, including licensing, inspection, and enforcement for high-risk radioactive materials to reduce the potential threat from a radiological dispersal device ("dirty bomb") or a radiological exposure device. In addition to ensuring physical security, the NRC maintains a [National Source Tracking System \(NSTS\)](#) to track and account for, from cradle to grave, all the radioactive sources that warrant greatest control. The United States is the first country in the world to require such enhanced security requirements for radioactive materials and both federal and state regulators ensure that materials are even more secure. Companies, like the one serviced by NNSA in New Jersey, have been implementing tighter security controls for many years. Furthermore, NRC and state regulators inspect to verify compliance with these security requirements to ensure that the public continues to be protected.