

April 26, 2001

PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION OF EVENT OR UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE -- PNO-IV-01-017A

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 the Region IV staff on this date.

Facility

Geo Systems Engineering, Inc.
Tulsa, Oklahoma
License No.: 27597-02-OK
State of Oklahoma Licensee

Licensee Emergency Classification

☐ Notification of Unusual Event
☐ Alert
☐ Site Area Emergency
☐ General Emergency
☒ Not Applicable

SUBJECT: STOLEN PORTABLE GAUGE - UPDATE

DESCRIPTION: On April 25, 2001, the Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality (ODEQ) notified the NRC Operations Center and Region IV that a previously reported stolen gauge had been recovered. On April 25, 2001, the Tulsa Emergency Management-Hazardous Materials Unit (Unit) cordoned off the area and notified the National Response Center that a nuclear gauge had been found by a city worker in a field near West Apache Street in downtown Tulsa. The National Response Center notified the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Region 6. The EPA regional office notified the ODEQ. The gauge was recovered by the licensee. The gauge was intact; however, the lock to the transportation case was missing and the gauge lock was opened. The licensee performed contamination surveys and sent them out for analysis. A local newspaper and local television stations reported the event.

Description of the Event: On April 20, 2001, the Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality (ODEQ) notified Region IV by telephone of a stolen portable gauge. The ODEQ was informed by Geo Systems Engineering, Inc., that a Humboldt Model 5001B portable gauge containing a 407.0 megabecquerel (11 millicuries) cesium-137 source and a 1.63 gigabecquerel (44 millicuries) americium-241/beryllium source had been stolen out of their company truck while parked at the operator's residence in Tulsa, Oklahoma at 6:20 a.m. (CDT) on April 20, 2001. The operator had briefly stopped by his residence. When he returned to his truck, he discovered that the chains securing the case to the truck had been cut and the gauge stolen. A police report was promptly filed with the local police department. The licensee plans to issue a press release and offer a reward for the return of the gauge.

Region IV received notification of this occurrence by phone from the State at 4:30 p.m. (CDT) on April 25, 2001. Region IV has informed OEDO, OSTP, NMSS, and Region IV's SLO and PAO.

This information has been discussed with the State and is current as of 10:30 a.m. on April 26, 2001.

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