

May 1, 2001

**PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION OF EVENT OR UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE** PNO-II-01-015

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**

Freedom Lincoln Mercury  
Chesapeake, Virginia

**Licensee Emergency Classification**

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

Subject: GENERAL LICENSED SEALED SOURCE FOUND IN A VACANT RESIDENTIAL AREA

On April 30, 2001, the NRC Region II office was notified by the Commonwealth of Virginia of an event regarding the identification of a General Licensed sealed source found at a vacant residential lot located in Virginia Beach, Virginia.

The device is an AEA Technology QSA, Inc. Model No. PDM.1002Hn Series, static eliminator sealed source containing 10 millicuries of polonium-210. On April 30, 2001, the licensee was notified by the manufacturer that the sealed source had been found by local authorities at a vacant residential lot. On April 30, 2001, licensee representatives retrieved the sealed source and are awaiting instructions from the manufacturer on how to properly package the device for return to them.

On April 29, 2001, an individual had found the sealed source in the vacant lot. The individual picked up the source, looked at it and observed the "Caution, Radioactive Materials" label, and left the source in the vacant lot where he found it. Later that night the individual developed a rash and went to a medical clinic thinking that the cause of the rash had been from handling the sealed source; however, the physician informed him that the rash was from poison ivy. The physician then instructed the individual to call local authorities to inform them that he had found the sealed source in the vacant lot. On April 30, 2001, the individual called 911 and the local authorities arrived at the vacant lot to investigate the call. After identifying the sealed source as a static eliminator, the manufacturer was notified. Dose rates measured on contact of the sealed source are less than 0.01 millirem per hour. The Commonwealth of Virginia is arranging to have a leak test conducted of the sealed source prior to having the sealed source shipped back to the manufacturer.

Region II received initial notification of this occurrence by telephone from the Commonwealth of Virginia on April 30, 2001. The information presented herein has been discussed with the licensee and is current as of 12:00 p.m. EDT on May 1, 2001.

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