

September 6, 2001

PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION OF EVENT OR UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE PNO-II-01-030

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

Smurfit-Stone Container Corporation
(An Agreement State licensee)
Port St. Joe, FL
License: 0194-1

Licensee Emergency Classification

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

Subject: MISSING PORTABLE GAUGE

The Florida Bureau of Radiological Health (the Bureau) notified the NRC Operations Center that the licensee had reported a missing portable gauge. The gauge is used to measure the thickness of materials and is manufactured by NDC Systems, Model 104, containing 30 millicuries (1.11 gigabecquerels) of americium-241. The gauge was last observed by the licensee in late June of 2001, locked in a steel toolbox in a locked laboratory. The facility is a paper mill that went bankrupt in 1998 and was purchased by the current licensee/owner. The mill is under demolition and several contractors have been removing equipment from the site. Several fixed gauges were on site and all have been accounted for except for this portable gauge. The licensee reported that no scrap metal had left the site. The licensee is continuing their search for the gauge.

The Bureau has the event under investigation.

Region II received initial notification of this occurrence from the Bureau by facsimile. This information presented herein has been discussed with the State and is current as of 4:30 p.m., September 6, 2001.

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