

February 5, 2002

PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION OF EVENT OR UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE -- PNO-IV-02-006B

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

Owensby and Kritikos
Sulphur, Louisiana
(State of Louisiana Licensee)

Licensee Emergency Classification

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

SUBJECT: UPDATE - INDUSTRIAL ACCIDENT RESULTING IN DAMAGE TO A RADIOACTIVE SEALED SOURCE

DESCRIPTION: This provides updated information regarding an event which occurred on January 18, 2002, when a State of Louisiana licensee, Owensby and Kritikos, notified the State of an industrial accident at a refinery in Lake Charles, Louisiana. During routine radiography activities the source drive cable crossed a high voltage cable resulting in damage to the radioactive source. The radiography device was manufactured by AEA Technologies, Model 660B (Serial Number B-2956), and contained 1.52 terabequerels (41 curies) of iridium-192.

On Monday, February 4, 2002, the State informed NRC that the source recovery was ongoing, and that a large piece of the source had been recovered from the vessel. The piece was estimated to consist of approximately 95 percent of the activity (previously estimated at 10 curies) that remained in the vessel after the accident. The source piece was placed in storage and will be sent along with the camera for damage assessment. The camera was recovered previously, and plans are being evaluated for shipment of the camera for damage assessment. The location for the damage assessment has not been determined.

Arrangements were made for whole body counting to be performed at DOE's Radiation Emergency Assistance Center (REAC) to further evaluate the health effects for the radiographer involved in the event. The REAC results indicated that the radiographer had an intake of 0.59 megabequerel (16 microcuries). Dose calculations for the radiographer from the REAC results have not been provided, but the dose estimates continue to be well below the annual dose limit of 5 rems.

Region IV continues to monitor the status of this situation through the State of Louisiana.

Region IV received updated information on February 4, 2002.

This information has been discussed with the State and is current as of 9:00 a.m. (CST) on February 4, 2002.

Region IV has informed NMSS, OSTP and OEDO.

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