

February 19, 2002

PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION OF EVENT OR UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE PNO-II-02-0007

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

McWane Cast Iron Pipe Company
(An Agreement State Licensee)
Birmingham, AL
License: 507

Licensee Emergency Classification

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

Subject: DAMAGE TO FIXED GAUGE

The Alabama Office of Radiation Control notified the NRC Operations Center that a fixed gauge at the licensee's facility had been damaged by heat on Wednesday, February 13, 2002. The gauge was an Ohmart model A2104 containing 4.5 curies (166.5 gigabecquerels) of cesium-137. The damage occurred when a piece of slag fell from the wall of a cupola, striking an afterburner, and turning the afterburner towards the gauge. The gauge was not directly in the fire but close enough to melt some of the lead shielding inside the gauge. The licensee's consultant performed radiation surveys, determined that there was no release of radioactive material outside of the gauge, and the maximum radiation reading was 5 millirem per hour on contact. The gauge was still mounted in place and isolated.

The gauge manufacturer sent a representative to the facility on Friday, February 15, 2002, and the gauge was surveyed, tested for leakage, and packaged for shipment back to the manufacturer's facility.

Region II received initial notification of this occurrence from the NRC Operations Center. This information has been discussed with the State and is current as of 2:00 p.m., Tuesday, February 19, 2002.

CONTACT: Richard L. Woodruff
404-562-4704

Hector Bermudez
404-562-4734