

February 28, 2002

PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION OF EVENT OR UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE PNO-II-02-010

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

Nucor Steel
(non- licensee)
Hertford, NC

Licensee Emergency Classification

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

Subject: NUCLEAR GAUGE FOUND IN SCRAP METAL

The North Carolina Division of Radiation Protection notified the NRC Operations Center that a nuclear gauge had been found at the Nucor Steel scrap metal facility in North Carolina. The gauge is a Texas Nuclear, Model 5207, serial number B34, containing a calculated 1.26 curies (46.9 gigabecquerels) of cesium-137 as a sealed source. A consultant for the steel industry reported that the gauge read 2 millirems per hour at 12 inches from the exterior of the gauge, the source was in a shielded position, and the gauge was secured and isolated from the public. The gauge information was obtained from labels on the exterior of the gauge.

The Division of Radiation Protection has determined from the gauge manufacturer that the gauge was one of four gauges distributed to the Essex Industrial Chemicals company in Baltimore, MD in January of 1984. The Division is working with the State of Maryland to contact the Essex company, to verify the information and to determine the status of the other three gauges.

Region II received initial notification of this occurrence from the North Carolina Division of Radiation Protection. This information presented herein has been discussed with the State and is current as of 5:00 p.m., Thursday, February 28, 2002.

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