

U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION**Date:**

April 30, 2012

TELEPHONE CONVERSATION RECORD**Mail Control
or Report No(s).****License No(s).**

19-00915-03

Docket No(s).

03004530

Name of Licensee: Dept. of Agriculture**Name of Participant(s):** John Jensen, RSO call to Todd Jackson, NRC**Telephone No.** 301-504-2441**Subject:** Old Ra-226 source discovered in lab drawer at Plum Island (inspection follow-up information)
(NOTE: This will be used as the Documents Title in ADAMS)

Mr. Jensen called to inform NRC about an 18 microCi Ra-226 source discovered in a cabinet drawer at Plum Island. The desk was planned for disposal and a standard waste screening for radiation detected the source. At no time was the source out of USDA control.

The furniture disposal effort is part of the work to move the Plum Island lab to Kansas. The source was detected on Feb 14, 2012 and John Jensen was notified on Feb 15, 2012. On Feb 17, 2012 personnel from Brookhaven National Lab (BNL) arrived at Plum Island to assist USDA in characterizing the unidentified source. BNL measured 140 microRem/hr at the front (outside) of the drawer. The cabinet drawer had been located in a currently functioning lab, placed about 12 feet from the nearest desk in use where a person might have worked routinely. The source appeared to be an old liquid scintillation counter (LSC) internal standard, probably from a 1980s vintage Packard Model Series 4000, according to the manufacturer contacted by USDA. Mr. Jensen believes the source had been removed in the past when the LSC was removed from service and stored in the drawer. Based on the location and occupancy of that part of the lab USDA estimated conservatively that the maximally exposed person working in the lab could have gotten about 7.5 mrem/year from the source, in a lab where personnel also used other radioactive materials.

USDA determined the discovery of the source was not reportable to the NRC per 10CFR20, and called for information purposes. I told Mr. Jensen this would be reviewed during a future inspection of the radiation safety program, and thanked him for calling to inform NRC.

Action Required: Review circumstances during a future routine inspection**Document Availability:**☒**Publicly Available**☐**Non-Publicly Available**☒**Non-Sensitive**☐**Non-Sensitive Copyright**☐**Sensitive- Proprietary**☐**Sensitive – Privacy Act/ PII**☐**Sensitive – Internal**☐**Sensitive – Security-Related**☐**Immediate Release****Normal Release Date: 6/5/2012****Delayed Release Date:****SUNSI Review Completed By:** TJJ

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