

Date: December 3, 1992

PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION OF EVENT OR UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE PN19273

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 I staff on this date.

Facility:

Yale-New Haven Hospital
20 York Street
New Haven, Connecticut 06504

Licensee Emergency Classification:

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

Docket No.: 06-00819-03

License No.: 030-01244

Event No.: NONE

Event Location Code: MAT

Subject: LOST-RECOVERED SOURCE/POSSIBLE THERAPY MISADMINISTRATION

Licensee's Radiation Safety Officer (RSO) informed the NRC Emergency Operations Center at 6:10 p.m., on December 2, 1992, that earlier that afternoon it was discovered that a 35 millicurie cesium-137 source was missing. The source, one of four inserted in a Fletcher apparatus used in the treatment of cancer of the cervix, was implanted in a female patient on November 30, 1992. The sources and apparatus were removed at 4:00 p.m. on December 1, 1992, and returned to the licensee's brachytherapy storage area. While the patient and the patient's room were surveyed at the time of source removal and found free of radioactivity, the sources were not counted until the afternoon of December 2, 1992. A technician cleaning the sources on December 2, 1992, could not account for all four sources removed and reported the loss of the source to the RSO. Licensee did a thorough survey of the hospital and did not find the source. A licensee representative was sent to perform a survey at the hospital's laundry services facility in Milford, CT. The source was recovered from a washer at the laundry services facility and returned to the hospital. Water samples from the laundry and a leak test of the sealed source found the source to be intact. The licensee believes that the source may have been lost on November 30, when the sources were placed in the patient, and that the source did not leave the hospital until the laundry was picked up on December 2, 1992. The licensee stated the radiation dose rate from the cesium-137 source is 11.5 millirem/hour at a distance of 1 meter. The licensee is conducting an investigation into the circumstances of this event. Region I is dispatching inspectors to review the licensee's actions in this matter. The State of Connecticut has been notified of this event. Region I is prepared to respond to media inquiries.

This information is current as of 10:00 a.m., December 3, 1992.

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(Rev. November 1992)