

December 20, 1996

PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION OF EVENT OR UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE

PNO-IV-96-071

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 IV staff in Arlington, Texas on this date.

FacilityLicensee Emergency Classification

Department Of Veterans Affairs	Notification of Unusual Event
Va Medical Center	Alert
3710 SW U.S. Veterans Hospital Road	Site Area Emergency
Portland, Oregon 97207	General Emergency
Dockets: 03002935 License No: 36-01395-01 X Not Applicable	

Subject: SODIUM IODIDE I-131 MISADMINISTRATION

On December 19, 1996, the radiation safety officer (RSO) for the Veterans Administration Medical Center, Portland, Oregon, notified the Region IV Walnut Creek Field Office of a misadministration involving an administration of sodium iodide I-131 (I-131). The RSO reported that on December 18, 1996, an authorized user intended to prescribe a thyroid uptake dose of 10-15 microcuries of I-131 to a 63 year old male patient. The uptake measurement was needed to assist the authorized user in determining the dosage required to treat the patient's hyperthyroid condition. During verbal discussions with the authorized user about the patient and intended dose for the uptake study, a nuclear medicine technologist misinterpreted the authorized user's instructions and subsequently administered 300 microcuries of I-131 to the patient. No written directive was prepared for the uptake study because the authorized user intended to administer a dosage of less than 30 microcuries.

Region IV plans to obtain additional information from licensee representatives when they are available on December 20. The region will perform an inspection to review this event.

The state of Oregon and NMSS have been informed.

Region IV received notification of this occurrence by telephone from the licensee's Radiation Safety Officer (RSO) at 3:00 p.m., PST, on December 19, 1996. Just prior to calling Region IV, the RSO notified the NRC Headquarters Operations Officer.

This information herein has been discussed with the licensee and is current as of 4:30 p.m., PST, December 19, 1996.

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