



DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

Medical Center
950 Campbell Avenue
West Haven CT 06516

In Reply Refer To:

DEC 23 1996

Docket No. 030-01237

License No. 06-0092-05

U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
ATTN: Document Control Desk
Washington, D.C. 20555

Re: Reply to a Notice of Violation (Routine Inspection No. 030-01237/96-001)

Dear Sir:

This is in response to your letter dated December 11, 1996, which reviewed the routine NRC inspection of our facility on November 5 and 8, 1996. In response to that letter and attached Notice of Violation, the following response is prepared:

(1) The reason for the violation:

We concur with Ms. Neelam Bhalla, NRC Inspector, regarding the cited violation in the research laboratory SG 18-E, Bldg.2, West Haven Campus.

(2) The corrective steps that have been taken and the results achieved:

The Radiation Safety Officer had discussed the issue with the lab director in question immediately after the discovery of lost material. In summary, we have taken the following corrective steps: (a) We have moved the radionuclides from the refrigerator in the back room to the refrigerator in the main lab area; in this way, more visual surveillance can be provided on the radioactive refrigerator. (b) We have obtained a lock box to store radionuclides in the refrigerator. In addition, we have installed a chain lock outside the refrigerator. The key to the lock box inside the refrigerator and the combination to the chain lock are controlled by only one individual in the lab. (c) The laboratory access has been restricted to the front entrance door only. Previously, there were two entrances to the laboratory; one in the front and one in the back. We believe that we have achieved a very air tight security regarding the storage and the access control of the stored radionuclides in the refrigerator in the laboratory in question..

(3) The corrective steps that will be taken to avoid further violations:

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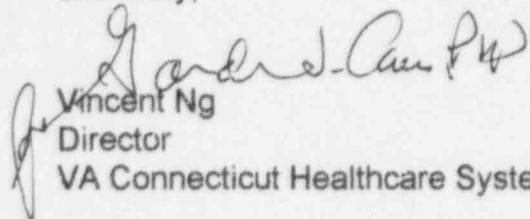
The RSO believes that education is the key to maintaining a successful radiation safety program. The Radiation Safety Office has been and will be emphasizing the security issues in our regularly scheduled radiation safety training sessions. In addition, the RSO has sent out to individual laboratories a description of recent incidents regarding the radionuclide security breaches which occurred at the NIH and MIT. Our radiation workers are fully aware of the NRC's emphasis on security issues surrounding the radionuclides.

(4) The date full compliance was achieved:

We believe that we have already achieved full compliance regarding the violation described in your letter. The date of full compliance achieved was August 6, 1996.

If you have any questions on this letter, please contact Dr. Terry Yoshizumi, RSO at (203) 932-5711 x3604.

Sincerely,


Vincent Ng
Director
VA Connecticut Healthcare System

cc:

1. Regional Administrator, NRC Region I
2. Francis Herbig/115HP, Director, VA National Health Physics Program