

November 6, 1996

PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION OF EVENT OR UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE PNO-II-96-078

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 in Atlanta, Georgia on this date.

Facility

Syncor International  
(An Agreement State Licensee)  
Gainesville, Florida  
License No: FL-1264-10

Licensee Emergency Classification

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

Subject: CONTAMINATED PACKAGE

Florida, an Agreement State, notified Region II that the Syncor radiopharmacy in Gainesville, Florida reported receiving a shipment of radiopharmaceuticals with technetium-99m contamination [400,000 counts per minute (cpm) per 100 square centimeters removable contamination] on the external surface of the package. The half-life of technetium-99m is six hours. The Department of Transportation limit for removable contamination on packages is 2,200 disintegrations per minute per 100 square centimeters.

The shipment contained a molybdenum-99:technetium-99m generator that had external and internal contamination, and another package of iodine-131 that was contaminated on the outside with technetium-99m. The generator came from DuPont in Villa Rica, MA and was shipped via Federal Express aircraft through the FedEx facility in Memphis, TN, to Jacksonville, FL, and then via truck to the Gainesville, FL facility.

Syncor surveyed the truck and driver who transported the packages to Syncor. The results showed the truck was contaminated on the inside, and the driver that handled the packages was also contaminated with technetium. Florida confirmed that the truck driver had been decontaminated. Florida inspectors surveyed the FedEx aircraft in Jacksonville and confirmed there was no contamination in the aircraft. Florida has been in contact with Federal Express.

Region II has notified the State of Tennessee regarding the event because the shipment passed through the Memphis, TN Federal Express facility. Region II also has discussed the event with Region I who reported that DuPont had notified Region I of the incident. Region II will continue to coordinate with Region I and the States.

This information is current as of 5:15 p.m. EST on Wednesday, 11/6/96.

Contact: R. Woodruff  
(404) 331-5545

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PDR I&E  
PNO-II-96-078 PDR

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