

August 28, 1985

PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION OF EVENT OR UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE -- PNO-IV-85-44

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 NRC staff on this date.

FACILITY: Saskatchewan Mining Development Corporation Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Canada	Licensee Emergency Classification: <input type="checkbox"/> Notification of Unusual Event <input type="checkbox"/> Alert <input type="checkbox"/> Site Area Emergency <input type="checkbox"/> General Emergency <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable
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SUBJECT: TRUCK-TRAIN ACCIDENT INVOLVING SPREAD OF URANIUM CONCENTRATES

At 6:15 p.m., CDT, August 27, 1985, the NRC HQ Duty Officer was notified of an accident between a train and a truck transporting dry natural uranium concentrates from Saskatchewan to a currently unknown destination. The accident occurred at 4:33 CDT, August 27, 1985, on Highway 52, approximately one mile north of the intersection between Highway 52 and Highway 200 in North Dakota, approximately 100 miles northeast of Bismarck, North Dakota. The driver of the truck was killed.

Initial response personnel from the State of North Dakota indicate that the vehicle was transporting 53 drums of dry uranium concentrate (approximately 45,000 pounds). Damage to the truck was extensive, and approximately thirty of the drums appear to have been damaged. The team reported that 10 to 15 of the drums were apparently empty or nearly empty. The area of contamination is limited to about a 100 by 200 foot area, except that some additional minor spread of contamination resulted during the initial rescue efforts. Approximately 30 persons from the initial response efforts have been controlled pending contamination check. The area has been cordoned off. A response team from the shipper has arrived at the scene. The highway is blocked by the derailed train, and traffic is being detoured on alternate routes. No fire resulted from the accident. Weather overnight was light rain with light winds. Meteorological conditions are not expected to significantly worsen. Actions are underway to cover the spill to reduce dispersion. No farms are within the immediate area of the accident.

The State of North Dakota disaster emergency center is coordinating the initial response activities. The EPA has advised that they will be sending a response team on August 28. The headquarters duty officer was requested to advise the FEMA response center. DOT has been notified. DOE is aware of the accident and plans no response.

Region IV is dispatching two health physicists, who should arrive at the accident scene in mid-afternoon on August 28.

Region IV does not plan to issue a press release. Media interest has been evident in North Dakota, and in headquarters. It is not known if the state plans to issue a press release at this time; however, associated press released an article carried in local newspapers in the Washington and Dallas areas which quoted a representative of the State of North Dakota.

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Dispatched to HQ via Faxpak 8/28/85 9:43 a.m.

This information is current as of 9:00 a.m. CDT, August 28, 1985.

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