

June 4, 1997

**PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION OF EVENT OR UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE** PNO-IV-97-034

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.

**Facility**

Syncor International Corp  
Syncor International Corp.  
881 Marcon Blvd.  
Allentown, Pennsylvania 18103

**Licensee Emergency Classification**

Notification of Unusual Event  
Alert  
Site Area Emergency  
General Emergency

Dockets: 03033224 License No: 04-26507-01MD X Not Applicable

Subject: RADIOPHARMACEUTICAL SHIPPING PACKAGE CONTAMINATION

On the afternoon of June 3, 1997, a Syncor driver retrieved a shipping container holding radiopharmaceuticals from Grandview Hospital (an NRC licensee) in Sellersville, PA. When the shipping container (also known as an "ammo box") was surveyed upon receipt at Syncor's Allentown pharmacy, approximately 980,000 disintegrations per minute (DPM) of removable technetium-99m contamination was found in an area of 170 square centimeters on one side of the container. A removable contamination survey of the Syncor delivery vehicle trunk showed approximately 110,000 DPM/100 square centimeters of removable contamination. No additional contamination of equipment, personnel or clothing was noted by Syncor during their surveys of the Allentown pharmacy and delivery vehicle. Syncor notified Grandview Hospital and the NRC Region IV Walnut Creek Field Office as required by 10 CFR 20.1906. The shipping container and delivery vehicle were secured and stored by Syncor to allow the contamination to naturally decay to background levels (technetium-99m has a 6-hour physical half-life).

Region I has dispatched an inspector to follow-up on the incident with Grandview Hospital and the Allentown Syncor pharmacy to determine the cause and source of the contamination.

The state of Pennsylvania will be informed by Region I.

Region IV received notification of this occurrence by telephone from Syncor's Health Physics Manager at 2 p.m. (PDT). Region IV has informed Region I and NMSS.

This information has been discussed with the licensee and is current as of 11:45 a.m. (CDT), June 4, 1997.

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