

June 20, 1997

PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION OF EVENT OR UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE PNO-II-97-035

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

Western Baptist Hospital  
(Agreement State Licensee)  
Paducah, Kentucky

Licensee Emergency Classification

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

Subject: POSSIBLE MEDICAL MISADMINISTRATION

On June 20, 1997, Region II was notified of a possible medical misadministration that occurred at Western Baptist Hospital in Paducah, Kentucky on May 19, 1997. A patient was being treated with a Cobalt-60 teletherapy unit in the area of the head and neck. During the treatment, the power to the unit was disrupted on two occasions as a result of a thunderstorm. As a result of the two power disruptions, the unit's table moved and the unit treated the wrong area of the patient. The licensee determined that the unintended treatment site received an exposure of 138 centigray to a depth of 0.5 centimeters. The intended treatment site did not receive the entire prescribed dose; however, the prescribing physician elected not to make up the missed dose. The prescribing physician indicated that the patient is not expected to have any adverse effects from the misadministration. The patient and referring physician were notified of the event.

The licensee was able to recreate the event to demonstrate how the event occurred. The licensee has contacted the manufacturer, Theratron. The manufacturer is reviewing the circumstances to determine if this is a generic issue. Upon notification of the results of the review, the Commonwealth of Kentucky will notify the NRC Region II office of further actions taken.

Region II and NMSS are following the generic aspects of this event to determine if a notice to other licensees is warranted.

This information is current as of 1:00 p.m. on June 20, 1997.

Contact: W. Loo  
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ID of R-5-1 OPERATING  
Experience

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