

PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION

QUB

September 7, 1979

PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION OF EVENT OR UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE--PNO-79-401

This preliminary notification constitutes EARLY notice of an event of POSSIBLE safety or public interest significance. The information presented is as initially received without verification or evaluation and is basically all that is known by IE staff on this date.

Facility: Metropolitan Edison Company
Three Mile Island, Units 1 and 2
Middletown, Pennsylvania
Docket Numbers 50-289/320

Subject: RADIOACTIVE CONTAMINATION OF CONTRACTOR LABORATORY PERSONNEL

On September 5, 1979, at approximately 3:00 p.m., six individuals working in a contractor laboratory trailer near the South gate were found to have contamination on their clothing after performing measurements on a filter pad containing a small quantity of primary coolant. The maximum contamination was 50,000 dpm on the shirts of two individuals. Three of the individuals were also found to have skin contamination on the hands, with a maximum of 6,000 dpm on the right hand of one individual. A contamination survey of the laboratory showed contamination levels of up to 60,000 dpm/100 cm² on one table top. All individuals were promptly decontaminated by washing their hands and the contaminated clothing collected for cleaning. The laboratory and analytical equipment have also been decontaminated.

In addition to the six individuals above, five other persons were present in the laboratory but did not show evidence of contamination of the skin or clothing. However, at approximately 10:30 a.m. on September 6, 1979, one of the five individuals was resurveyed by a member of the TMI Health Physics staff and was found to have maximum contamination of 11,000 dpm on his trousers and 1100 dpm on his shirt. A survey of his automobile and motel room showed no evidence of contamination.

All eleven individuals are to receive whole body counts and submit urine specimens for bioassay. The NRC Resident Office staff is following up on the decontamination of the laboratory and evaluation of these individuals.

An NRC Resident Office on-site inspector became aware of this event at approximately 6:15 p.m. on September 5, 1979.

Media interest is expected because of the public sensitivity to activities at Three Mile Island. The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania was informed at 9:15 a.m. on September 7, 1979. A press release is planned by the licensee.

NRC, Region I, (Philadelphia) received notification of this occurrence by telephone from the NRC Resident Office at 4:00 p.m. on September 6, 1979.

PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION
CONTINUED

7910110 663 5

Contact: L. J. Cunningham, IE x28188; L. B. Higginbotham, IE x28454

Distribution: Transmitted H St _____

Chairman Hendrie

Commissioner Kennedy

Commissioner Gilinsky

Commissioner Bradford

Commissioner Ahearne

ACRS

S. J. Chilk, SECY

C. C. Kammerer, CA

(For Distribution)

Transmitted: MNBB _____

L. V. Gossick, EDO

H. L. Ornstein, EDO

J. J. Fouchard, PA

N. M. Haller, MPA

R. G. Ryan, OSP

H. K. Shapar, ELD

P. Bldg 11.05

H. R. Denton, NRR

R. C. DeYoung, NRR

R. J. Mattson, NRR

D. Vassallo, NRR

D. Eisenhut, NRR

SS Bldg _____

W. J. Dircks, NMSS

S. Levine, RES

V. Stello, IE

Region I _____

Landow _____

J. J. Cummings, OIA

(MAIL)

R. Minogue, SD

PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION