

NOTIFICATION OF EVENT OR UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE-PNO-TMI-85-09

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: GPU Nuclear Corporation  
Three Mile Island, Unit 2  
Docket Number 50-320

Licensee Emergency Classification:  
X Not Applicable

Subject: RADIOCHEMISTRY ANALYSIS ERROR

The licensee has identified an error in their radiochemistry analysis procedure for quantifying strontium-90 (Sr-90) in solid samples. The procedure is believed to have been in use since late 1981. The error has resulted in solid samples analyzed at TMI-2 being reported at one-half of their actual Sr-90 values.

A preliminary evaluation by the licensee indicates that the error is not likely to impact compliance with regulations related to occupational exposure or radiological effluent releases. The error does potentially affect past shipments of low level radioactive waste to U. S. Ecology in Hanford, Washington. Specifically, some shipments may not have been accurately classified as required by NRC regulations (10 CFR 61.55).

The analysis error is unique to TMI-2 which uses a beta spectrometer for rapid assessment of accident generated Sr-90 levels. The error involved failure to account for the equilibrium of Sr-90 and yttrium-90 during calibration of the spectrometer.

The State of Washington and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania have been informed. The licensee is preparing a press release. Media interest is expected. Three Mile Island Program Office staff are following the licensee's continuing evaluation.

This information is current at 2:00 PM, September 25, 1985.

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