



United States Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Office of Public Affairs, Region I
475 Allendale Road King of Prussia, PA 19406
Fax: 610/337-5241
Internet: dps@nrc.gov or nas@nrc.gov

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Contact: Diane Screnci (610/337-5330)
Neil A. Sheehan (610/337-5331)

**MOISTURE-DENSITY GAUGE CONTAINING RADIOACTIVE MATERIAL
IS REPORTED MISSING BY CONNECTICUT COMPANY**

Test-Con., Inc., of Danbury, Conn., has notified the Nuclear Regulatory Commission that a portable moisture-density gauge containing two sealed sources of radioactive material was stolen earlier this week.

According to the company, a technician picked up the gauge in Danbury, Conn., at about 4 a.m. yesterday, loaded it into the trunk of his car and then parked outside his South Bronx, N.Y., home from 5 a.m. to 7 a.m. He realized the gauge was missing after arriving at another job site.

The gauge contains approximately 8 millicuries of cesium-137 and 40 millicuries of americium-241. The gauge makes its measurements by projecting the radiation from the two radioactive sources into the ground and then displaying the reflected radiation on a dial on top of the gauge.

The gauge, which reportedly was in its transportation case, consists of the shielding container with a plunger-type handle protruding from the top to be used to extend and then retract the radioactive source from the shielded position. When not in use, the handle is normally locked, with the sources in the retracted, safely shielded position.

The rectangular base of the gauge is yellow, with a calculator-type keypad mounted to the top. It carries the name of the manufacturer, "Humboldt Model 5001." The serial number is "1967." The gauge weighs about 22 pounds.

Any attempt to tamper with the radioactive sources in the gauge would subject the person to radiation exposure. Handling of the unshielded sources outside their container would carry a risk of radiation injury.

Anyone seeing the gauge should leave it alone and report its location to the local police or the New York City Department of Health 212/764-7667.

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