

United States Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Office of Public Affairs, Region I
475 Allendale Road King of Prussia, PA 19401
Phone: 610/337-5330 Fax: 610/337-5241
Internet: dps@nrc.gov or nas@nrc.gov

I-97-81

Contact: Diane Screnci
Neil A. Sheehan

July 11, 1997

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CLARIFICATION: PLEASE NOTE LAST PARAGRAPH REGARDING WHERE TO CALL

RADIOACTIVE SOURCE BELIEVED LEFT AT DELAWARE JOB SITE

Ambric Engineering, Incorporated, of Philadelphia has told the Nuclear Regulatory Commission that the radioactive source from a portable gauge apparently was left at a job site in Claymont, De., on June 25.

The company was using the moisture-density gauge at the Bally Mead development on Delaware state route 92 on June 25. Following that work, Ambric Engineering sent the gauge to its manufacturer for maintenance. On July 10, the manufacturer notified Ambric that the source rod was missing from the gauge. The source, which is a small, less than half-inch, steel capsule, was 6 millicuries of cesium-137. It's believed the source broke off at the job site.

Ambric has hired a contractor to perform surveys to locate the missing sealed source. To date, these efforts have not been successful in locating the source rod. An NRC inspector was sent to the site on July 10 to review licensee actions and to follow up on the loss of the source.

It is possible that the source rod may have broken off at the job site and been picked up by a member of the public. Any attempt to tamper with the radioactive source would subject a person to radiation exposure. Handling the source would carry a risk of radiation injury.

Anyone seeing the source should leave it alone and report its location to the NRC Operations Center at (301) 816-5100. The Operations Center will accept collect calls regarding this matter.

#