

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

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NRC SENDS INSPECTOR TO NEW JERSEY IN RESPONSE TO BROKEN EXIT SIGN

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission has dispatched an inspector to Robbinsville, N.J., in response to the discovery of a broken exit sign containing radioactive tritium. The material does not pose any immediate health hazard to workers at the office or members of public.

At about 11 a.m. today, Sovereign Consulting Inc. reported it was in possession of the broken sign at its Robbinsville office. It had been transported there by an employee from a site in Whippany, N.J., where Sovereign is overseeing the demolition of several buildings owned by Rowe International Inc. Once at the office, it was determined that at least one of the tubes inside the sign that contains tritium used for illumination purposes was broken.

The NRC inspector was performing wipe surveys for any radioactive contamination in the area where the sign was stored and other areas, if necessary. The Whippany site will also be inspected in the near future.

About 30 other tritium exit signs were also retrieved from the demolition site, but they have been found to be intact.

Tritium exit signs are licensed by the NRC under a general license. Owners are required under terms of the license either to return them to the manufacturer or dispose of them by approved means at the end of their use.

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