



NRC NEWS

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NRC STAFF PROPOSES \$3,250 FINE AGAINST COLUMBIA, MO., HOSPITAL FOR INADVERTENT LOSS OF MEDICAL RADIATION SOURCES

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission has proposed, and the Boone Hospital Center of Columbia, Mo., has paid a \$3,250 fine for the inadvertent loss of radioactive iodine seeds used in the treatment of prostate cancer.

An NRC inspection determined that the seeds, about the size of a grain of rice and containing radioactive iodine-125, were inadvertently washed down a sink during cleaning activities on May 18. The seeds were lost during a cleaning process normally used for empty containers. The cleaning was performed by an untrained and unauthorized employee.

The seeds were washed into the sanitary sewer system where they would not represent a health and safety hazard because of the relatively short lifetime of the radioactive materials and because the radioactive iodine was contained in the metal seeds.

The hospital was cited for failing to maintain control and constant surveillance over the seeds. Following the incident, the hospital took extensive corrective action, providing additional training for the hospital staff and strengthening procedures.

“This fine was proposed to emphasize the importance of maintaining the security and control of NRC-licensed radioactive material,” said James Caldwell, NRC Regional Administrator.

The hospital paid the fine upon being told by the NRC that a civil penalty may be proposed for the violation.

The letter and Notice of Violation issued to the hospital are available from the NRC’s Region III Office of Public Affairs and will be posted on the NRC’s web site at:

<http://www.nrc.gov/what-we-do/regulatory/enforcement/current.html#materials> .

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