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Press Release

Radioactive Gauge used to Test Materials used in Highway Projects Stolen

(Albuquerque) Someone stole a radioactive gauge used to measure the density and moisture of construction materials used in highway projects from the back of a pickup last week in Albuquerque.

The Seaman C-300 density/moisture gauge, which was stolen from the back of a pickup truck parked in Albuquerque's South Valley between the evening of Friday (Aug. 18) and the afternoon of (Aug. 20) has two sealed radioactive sources. Exposure to the gauge is similar to receiving the amount of radiation in a chest X-ray. However, unsealing the radioactive sources in the equipment would create a much higher exposure to radiation.

Prolonged exposure to radioactivity from the equipment could burn or cause tissue damage in people. Ingesting radioactive materials can also be lethal and cause organ damage. People should not touch or tamper with the gauge and should stay at least 15 feet away from the equipment. The machinery belonged to Albuquerque-based highway construction contractor A.S. Horner Inc.

Anyone with information about the gauge should call Ed Vigil, NMED Radiation Specialist, at (505) 222-9517 or Walter Medina, Radiation Control Bureau Program Manager, at 476-3236. For more information, call Marissa Stone, NMED Communication Director, at (505) 827-0314 or (505) 231-0475.



Model C-300 Seaman Density/Moisture Gauge

This is a picture of a Seaman C-300 Density/Moisture gauge. Both radioactive sources are located within the green portion of the container near the bottom towards both ends of the unit. The sources are completely enclosed within the unit with no source rod assembly with this model. The unit is activated when the carry handle is rotated to above the unit.