

NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF
ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES
DIVISION OF RADIATION PROTECTION



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March 11, 1998

DRP Information Notice 98-01

Memorandum

To: All North Carolina Medical Licensees Authorized To Possess Radioactive Material

From: J. Aaron Padgett, Chief
Radioactive Materials Section 

Subject: Missing Radioactive Material

The Division of Radiation Protection (the Division) is issuing this information notice to alert medical licensees to an incident involving missing radioactive material at the Moses Cone Hospital in Greensboro, NC and of the investigation that is underway. It is expected that recipients will review the information for applicability to their facilities and consider actions, as appropriate, to avoid similar problems. Medical Licensees may wish to inventory their sources and review their security procedures for adequacy. However, suggestions contained in this information notice are not requirements of the Division, and no specific action or written response is required. Security of licensed radioactive sources will be reviewed by Division personnel during future inspections.

On Wednesday, March 4, 1998, Moses Cone Hospital in Greensboro, NC reported to the Division that all 19 of their Cs-137 brachytherapy sources were missing from the locked storage safe where they are stored when not in use. The cesium sources are approximately 1/8 inch in diameter by 3/4 inch in length with one end brightly colored. The total activity of the 19 sources is 603 millicuries.

Moses Cone reported that the sources were last used for patient treatment on December 16, 1997. Three of the sources were leak tested on December 23, 1997 which is the last date that Moses Cone Hospital can account for the sources. The sources were discovered to be missing on March 4, 1998 when the RSO attempted to complete a routine quarterly inventory.

The sources were stored in 6 drawers of a locked safe in a locked room that could only be entered from the