



Written by [D. Michael DeRidder](#) on December 16, 2024

Nuclear Regulatory Commission Reports Missing Radioactive Waste Material

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) [released an event notification report](#) on December 13 announcing that a radioactive pin source was reported missing on December 3. (A “pin source” is a tiny radioactive “pin” used for calibrating medical-imaging scanners.)

The Germanium-68 (Ge-68) waste material was being transported for disposal, and went missing while in transit in Newfield, New Jersey. “The shipping container arrived at its destination damaged and empty,” noted the report. In its notification to the NRC, the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) stated:



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The licensee reported to NJDEP on December 3, 2024, that a Ge-68 pin source that they sent for disposal [was] lost in transit on December 2, 2024. The source is [an] Eckert & Ziegler model HEGL-0132, with current approximate activity of 0.267 mCi. The shipping container arrived at its destination damaged and empty. The licensee has filed a claim with the shipper. If the source is not located within the 30 days, the licensee will follow-up with a full written report to include root cause(s) and corrective actions.

The event report said the missing material contained a very small amount of radioactive material. “This material event contains a ‘less than Cat3’ level of radioactive material,” it stated:

Sources that are “Less than IAEA Category 3 sources,” are either sources that are very unlikely to cause permanent injury to individuals or contain a very small amount of radioactive material that would not cause any permanent injury.

The pin was used to calibrate PET/CT scanners, and was used at the Nazha Cancer Center in New Jersey. The NRC notification stated the event [was reportable under](#) 10 CFR 20.2201(a)(1)(ii):

Within 30 days after the occurrence of any lost, stolen, or missing licensed material becomes known to the licensee, all licensed material in a quantity greater than 10 times the quantity specified in appendix C to part 20 that is still missing at this time [must be reported to the NRC].

Some have speculated that the [recent drone sightings](#) reported in New Jersey are related to the search for the missing material.



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