

**United States Environmental Protection Agency  
Region X  
POLLUTION REPORT**

**Date:** Thursday, November 9, 2006

**From:** Earl Liverman

**Subject:** Spokane Airport FedEx Incident  
Spokane Airport FedEx Incident  
Spokane International Airport, Spokane, WA  
Latitude: 47.6198611  
Longitude: -117.5338333

<b>POLREP No.:</b>	1	<b>Site #:</b>	
<b>Reporting Period:</b>	10/04/06	<b>D.O. #:</b>	
<b>Start Date:</b>		<b>Response Authority:</b>	CERCLA
<b>Mob Date:</b>	10/4/2006	<b>Response Type:</b>	
<b>Demob Date:</b>	10/4/2006	<b>NPL Status:</b>	Non NPL
<b>Completion Date:</b>		<b>Incident Category:</b>	
<b>CERCLIS ID #:</b>		<b>Contract #</b>	
<b>RCRIS ID #:</b>			

**Site Description**

On 4 October 2006, a shipping container carrying material used in nuclear medicine was damaged in a transportation accident at the FedEx shipping terminal, Spokane International Airport, Spokane, WA. The damaged package, which contained 63 Cesium-131 capsules in a lead overpack, was discovered by a FedEx employee. Cesium-131, which emits only low energy x-rays, was placed into a ceramic core and the core was then placed inside a titanium capsule (about the size of an uncooked grain of rice) for commercial shipping. The capsules are implanted near or in a cancerous tumor to damage the genetic material of the cancer cells, making it impossible for the cells to continue to grow and divide. Similar packages are routinely shipped around the country.

EPA, along with Washington State Department of Health Radiation Protection staff and representatives from the manufacturer IsoRay responded to the incident. Workers who were in the area at the time of the incident were screened and no radioactivity was detected. A comprehensive radiological screening was also conducted of the suspected affected area, as well as the adjoining tarmac, FedEx terminal and adjoining terminals, and airport maintenance equipment. No radioactive material was detected in the outlying areas; however, the material, where detected at the incident location, was removed by the manufacturer's representatives. In addition, FedEx employees were provided several briefings to ensure that they were fully familiar with the incident. Decontamination and other incident-related activities were completed by the end of the day.

**Current Activities**

None

**Planned Removal Actions**

None

**Next Steps**

None

**Key Issues**

None

**Disposition of Wastes**

Recovered capsules and the damaged shipping container were returned to the manufacturer. All other non-hazardous debris were disposed of in an appropriate manner.