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No: II-98-32 Contact: Ken Clark or Roger Hannah FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE (Wednesday, April 22, 1998)

NRC STAFF ISSUES CONFIRMATORY ORDER MODIFYING RADIOACTIVE MATERIAL LICENSE OF A PHYSICIAN IN PUERTO RICO

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff has issued a confirmatory order to Dr. José M. Colón Vaquer of Manati, Puerto Rico which modifies the license to discontinue authorization for use of a Strontium-90 eye applicator and requires that the source be kept in locked, safe storage. Dr. Colón Vaquer had notified the NRC in a March 6 letter that he had ceased use of the source and had placed it in safe, secure storage.

Strontium-90 is a licensed, radioactive material the physician is authorized by the NRC to possess for use in the medical treatment of superficial eye conditions.

NRC officials said the order was issued because agency inspections at the physician's facilities resulted in numerous violations of NRC requirements, involving two misadministrations to patients and use of licensed material during a period when the physician's license to possess and use the material was expired.

The order confirms actions the physician has agreed to take pending further possible regulatory action and resolution of the NRC concerns.

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