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AEC News Release Regarding
Small Gas Leak

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U.S. ATOMIC ENERGY COMMISSION
NEVADA OPERATIONS OFFICE
P. O. Box 14100 Ph. 702-734-3851
LAS VEGAS, NEVADA 89114

NV-71-30

May 17, 1971

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(NOTE: The following was telephoned to the Colorado press on Friday, May 14, 1971.)

A very small gas leak of approximately one cubic foot per day has developed in the pressure control valve system at the Project Rulison emplacement well near Grand Valley, Colorado.

The leak constitutes no hazard to the public either from the natural gas or from radioactivity. Less than one percent of the radioactivity present when the well was completed remains in the gas, and proper ventilation will prevent an explosive mixture from forming.

It is estimated that about 50,000 cubic feet of natural gas will have to be flared to lower the well head pressure which now stands at about 1270 pounds per square inch before repairs can be made. It is expected that the flaring will take less than one day to reduce the pressure to a safe level. Once repairs have been made, the well will be shut in again.

Safety personnel from the AEC and radiation monitors are in the area to assure public safety.

The well head is checked twice a day. The leak was discovered at 8 a.m. Friday morning, and steps to stop the leak were promptly started. Repairs are expected to be completed Saturday, May 15.

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