

C455-10-13

June 6, 1956.

Dr. G.S. Hume,
Acting Deputy Minister,
Mines and Technical Surveys Department,
294 Albert Street,
Ottawa, Ontario.

Dear Dr. Hume:

Last November I sent you three copies of a report by our Occupational Health Division on "The Arsenic Problem at Yellowknife" which described the Yellowknife situation from the time it arose until August 1955. I am now enclosing three copies of a supplemental report which discusses data obtained between September 1955 and March 1956.

The report indicates that the general hazard to public health in the area as a result of arsenic deposition is no greater than it was last year and suggests that the precautions taken and warnings given in previous years at spring runoff time should be sufficient this year.

Concentrations of arsenic in Veronica, Jackfish, Frame, Long and Kam Lakes have increased to the point where their waters are considered unsafe to drink. Although these lakes are not usually used as sources of drinking water, persons camping near them might use them for this purpose. The report therefore recommends that notices should be posted at each of these lakes warning that the water contains arsenic and should not be drunk. I have been advised by the officers of the Occupational Health Division who are directly concerned with this problem that they think that this should be done immediately.

I have asked Mr. Robertson, if he concurs in the recommendation, to inform me when the necessary action has been taken.

Yours very truly,

G.D.W. Cameron, M.D., D.P.H.
Deputy Minister, National Health.

Enc.

JFW/mf

fw