

To .....K. Blower.....

Date ..... March 3, 1983 .....

Copies To .....D. Dickson; B. Cross.....

Ref. ....

From .....K.S. Morton.....

Subject ...D. Johnston - Excessive Urinary Arsenic Levels.....

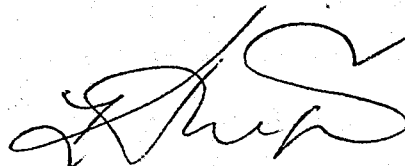
Following the recent test during which D. Johnston agreed to avoid eating shellfish for a ten day period, from January 14th to January 24th, the January 14th results have been received from Health & Welfare Canada. The level of 516 ug/l urinary arsenic is clearly above the recommended maximum of 150 ug/l by a large margin.

Over the years a pattern of high urinary arsenic levels has been established for this individual and his habit of eating shellfish regularly is known to introduce large errors into the data which precludes the likelihood of obtaining useful information without setting up a special procedure. Although the final test results are not in, Drs. Thompson and Kirkbridge have expressed concern and have recommended changes in Johnston's work environment.

In compliance with these recommendations, Johnston has today been withdrawn from his normal work area and is now being trained for work in an area of the Mill known to be relatively arsenic free. It is anticipated that he shall remain out of his normal work area until his urinary arsenic levels are consistently below the recommended maximum. Weekly testing will be done to monitor his progress.

It will be necessary to differentiate between organic and inorganic urinary arsenic if meaningful data is to result, because it is not likely that Johnston's eating habits will change.

Since N. Plante's urinary arsenic level is also unacceptably high, there is some suspicion that poor working practice is at least partially responsible. Plante will be retested immediately and if his level remains high, he too will be withdrawn from the work area. In the meantime the working practices and conditions are being investigated, a size analysis of arsenic particulates is being conducted to check appropriateness of protective equipment and safe working procedures are being emphasized in discussions with shifters and workmen.



K.S. Morton

KSM:jh