P. A.

850-5-X751

Government of Canada / Gouvernement du Canada

MEMORANDUM **NOTE DE SERVICE**

TO / À: Dr. L. Black,
Director General, Program Management,
Medical Services Branch.

FROM / DE: Acting Chief,
Environmental Standards Division.

SECURITY - CLASSIFICATION — DE SÉCURITÉ:

OUR FILE — N/RÉFÉRENCE:

YOUR FILE — V/RÉFÉRENCE:

DATE: July 8, 1975

SUBJECT / OBJET: Potential hazards associated with the use of arsenic-bearing tailings in Yellowknife, N.W.T.

The attached letter addressed to Dr. Grimard has been referred to me since the analytical expertise of the Bureau of Chemical Hazards relevant to this problem is now in the Environmental Standards Division. Before I reply to Dr. Covill I would appreciate receiving your comments on the proposed investigation in light of other programs which Medical Services Branch is currently conducting in the Yellowknife area.

P. Toft

P. Toft.

ACTION	PA date	BF date
M ~~77~~		
INFORMATION		
M 63	M	M
~~M 67~~	M	M
M	M	M

11 July 75

M67 Duff could you please review. In this somebody we should handle ourselves. In any event, would you like to write to Dr Covill to re-inform them of our mandate & the "do right" method of directing requests for this type of assistance. "who needs enemies?"

TBD

2-11-7

Health and Welfare Canada | Santé et Bien-être social Canada

Medical Services
Northwest Territories Region
14th Floor Baker Centre
10025 - 106 Street
Edmonton, Alberta
T5J 1H2

Your file Votre référence

Our file Notre référence

151 - 1 - 5 - N (N3)

June 11, 1975

Chief
Health Effects Division
Environmental Health Directorate
Room 112, Environmental Health Centre
Tunney's Pasture
Ottawa K1A 0L2

Dear Dr. Grimard,

Correspondence relative to the contamination of soils, playing fields etc. in the city of Yellowknife due to alleged indiscriminate use of As203 - bearing tailings as fill by the city have come to our attention. (Your letter of 24/02/75 addressed to DINA refers.)

It is noted that levels as high as 34% of As203 have been demonstrated from areas close to if not within the city limits.

Would it be appropriate to ask if your division would be prepared to make an investigation into this situation and advise this region on necessary action.

Yours truly,

F. J. Covill, M.B., B.S., M.F.C.M.,
D.P.H., Regional Director

c.c. D. G. P. M.
Medical Services Branch
Att: T. Patterson

mlm

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Government of Canada / Gouvernement du Canada

MEMORANDUM **NOTE DE SERVICE**

TO / À: M67

FROM / DE: M69

ACTION | PA date | BF date
C7 | 16/7/75

INFORMATION

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16/7/75

SECURITY - CLASSIFICATION — *DE SÉCURITÉ*

OUR FILE — *N/RÉFÉRENCE*: C-15

YOUR FILE — *V/RÉFÉRENCE*

DATE: July 8, 1975.

SUBJECT / *OBJET*: Arsenic in Soil, Yellowknife

The attached correspondence and report was forwarded to me from Argyle Street, and I do not know whether you had an opportunity to see it before.

I have not taken any action on it as there are a number of questions concerning the handling of the report as well as its contents.

First of all, I think it is unfortunate that the matter was placed in the hands of the Health Protection Branch - in the first instance, by a request from Mr. Homulos of Indian and Northern Affairs to Mr. Windish, Health Protection Branch, for an analysis of the soil samples. Dr. Covill has further compounded the problem by corresponding directly with Dr. Grimard of the Health Protection Branch. Secondly, we are not satisfied that the soil analysis report is correct, in that it assumes that the arsenic contaminant in the soil is arsenic trioxide. It is quite possibly largely arsenopyrite, and we are not, at this stage, prepared to express an opinion regarding the potential health hazard associated with exposure to soil with this type of contaminant.

It would seem that Indian and Northern Affairs, the Health Protection Branch, and the Medical Services Branch should not be independently proceeding with this type of problem before the D.O.E. study on soil has been completed this summer. You may recall, in my informal notes on the Yellowknife visit, that the University of Alberta is doing a study on soils and vegetation under a grant from E.P.S. and the report should be available this fall. In conducting this work, they will specifically identify the form in which arsenic is found in the soil. In the meantime, we are trying to determine the significance of arsenic trioxide versus other forms, e.g., arsenopyrite, in relation to human health.

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MEDICAL SERVICES
HEADQUARTERS

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QUARTIERS GÉNÉRAUX
SERVICES MÉDICAUX

If Medical Services considers it necessary to involve headquarters of the Health Protection Branch in this type of matter, I think it should be done either through your office or at least in consultation with you. In this instance, there may be justification for involving the Health Protection Branch, but I think it should be in the form of inviting them to investigate or study the significance of health exposures to various types of arsenic compounds.

T. H. Patterson, M.D.

Encl.