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The inquest continues.

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Findings on arsenic challenged by Indians

An Indian group has announced its own study results to show there is an arsenic health hazard in Yellowknife.

Last week the federal Health and Welfare Department announced its tests had shown a health hazard was not likely except possibly to workers in the Giant Yellowknife Mines Ltd. gold mine and mill.

Yesterday the National Indian Brotherhood said its independent survey "shows more than one-third of the individuals tested had levels that were unacceptably high."

Both were testing levels of arsenic in hair samples, an accepted means of screening out those who may have high

arsenic levels in their bodies.

The Government study, done in February, noted that some authorities consider five parts per million to be an acceptable level while others accept 10 ppm.

It found 577 of the 700 people tested have levels less than five ppm, 60 had levels between five and 10 ppm, and 63, more than two-thirds of whom worked in the mine or mill, had levels higher than 10 ppm.

In a statement yesterday, the Indian group referred to five ppm as "the arbitrary level chosen by Ottawa as indicating arsenic exposure" and six of 18 people it tested, including four of six children under 13, were over this level.