

255 Argyle Avenue,
Ottawa, Ontario,
K1A 0L3.

15 October 1975

850-5-X751 (M10)

Mr. S. M. Hodgson,
Commissioner of the
Northwest Territories,
Yellowknife, Northwest Territories,
XOE 1H0.

Dear Commissioner Hodgson:

News Release on Arsenic Levels in Yellowknife

Your telex to Mr. Dewar on the above topic has been referred to me for reply. Mr. Dewar left Medical Services in September and I have been appointed in his place.

First of all let me express to you my regrets that you were not given adequate advance notice of the above release. This release was originally scheduled for the 30th of September in part to accommodate the local news media and it was intended that your office would be provided with a copy at least 24 hours ahead of time. Some difficulties were encountered in the preparation of the release which changed the date and this in part may be the reason why you were not provided with a copy until shortly before the Press conference.

I appreciate your suggestion of the possibility of developing a check list in order to avoid similar problems in the future. Dr. Black of this office will be visiting Yellowknife next week and I shall ask him to take this matter up with the officials at that time.

Yours sincerely,

Charles-E. Caron,
Assistant Deputy Minister,
Medical Services Branch.

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MS REGN OTT

COMM NWTGOV YK
8 OCTOBER 1975

D. B. DEWAR
ASSISTANT DEPUTY MINISTER
MEDICAL SERVICES BRANCH
HEALTH AND WELFARE CANADA
255 ARGYLE STREET
OTTAWA

TEXT OF NEWS RELEASE ON ARSENIC LEVELS IN YELLOWKNIFE UNFORTUNATELY ONLY ARRIVED ON THE DEPUTY COMMISSIONER'S DESK ONE HOUR BEFORE THE PRESS CONFERENCE WAS HELD. THIS IS INDEED UNFORTUNATE AS WE HAVE RAISED THIS PROBLEM WITH HEALTH AND WELFARE SEVERAL TIMES. IT IS MY UNDERSTANDING THIS IS WHAT HAPPENED LAST MAY. IT WOULD SEEM TO ME OF THE GREATEST IMPORTANCE THAT THERE SHOULD BE SOME WAY TO IMPROVE COMMUNICATIONS BETWEEN OUR TWO OFFICES. WHEN THINGS LIKE THIS HAPPEN, WHETHER IT BE THE FAULT OF MY PEOPLE OR YOURS, IT IS BOUND TO ADVERSELY AFFECT THE WORKING RELATIONSHIP AND LESSEN THE EFFECTIVENESS OF OUR JOINT EFFORTS. I HAVE NO INTENTION OF TAKING THIS MATTER FURTHER. RATHER, I WONDER IF THERE IS NOT SOME WAY THAT WE COULD DEVELOP A SORT OF CHECK LIST THAT OUR PEOPLE COULD CHECK OFF, MAKING SURE THAT VARIOUS BASES ARE TOUCHED TO GIVE TIME FOR COMMENT BEFORE RELEASES ARE MADE TO THE PRESS. MAY I HAVE YOUR COMMENTS.

BEST REGARDS.

S. M. HODGSON
COMMISSIONER OF THE NWT

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