

455-10-13

Ottawa, Ont.,
June 13th, 1950.

R.A. Gibson, Esq.,
Deputy Commissioner,
Administration of the Northwest
Territories,
Dept. of Resources and Development,
Ottawa, Ont.

Dear Mr. Gibson:

Reference your letter of June 3rd, concerning the arsenic problem at Yellowknife and the attached report by the Chief Mining Inspector, and in particular, a suggested inspection by officers of this Division of the proposed burial area for this arsenic, it is expected that personnel from the Division could visit the Yellowknife area about the end of June. During this visit it would also be possible to study the continuing survey.

As regards the burial of arsenic in an isolated area, there appear to be many unknown factors associated with the large-scale ground storage of this material. The ultimate fate of the buried arsenic is a question which we do not consider we are qualified to answer. If, however, the authorities concerned can satisfy themselves that this dangerous material could be contained within the disposal area and that it would not produce widespread arsenic contamination, then it should be possible for us to suggest local measures for control, such as the fencing of the area and the daily coverage of the arsenic.

We realize that these recommendations would be of limited value as far as approval of the site is concerned, but I am sure you will appreciate that the problem presented by storing thousands of tons of arsenic in the ground, would require a detailed study by experts in other fields.

Yours very truly,

K.C. Charron, M.D.,
Chief, Industrial Health Division.

KCC/GS