

PLEASE RETURN TO MEDICAL SERVICES

P.A.

→ Mr. Fleming
Lo note P.A.



CANADA

MINISTER OF NATIONAL HEALTH AND WELFARE
AND
MINISTER RESPONSIBLE FOR THE STATUS OF WOMEN

MINISTRE DE LA
SANTÉ NATIONALE ET DU BIEN-ÊTRE SOCIAL
ET
MINISTRE CHARGÉ DE LA SITUATION DE LA FEMME

OTTAWA, K1A 0K9

NOV 5 1976

The Honourable Warren Allmand, P.C., M.P.,
Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern
Development,
House of Commons,
OTTAWA, Ontario.
K1A 0A6

My dear Colleague:

I am enclosing a copy of a letter received from
Commissioner Hodgson addressed to the Chairman of the
Northwest Territories Water Board. A copy was also sent to
your predecessor, the Honourable J. Judd Buchanan.

It is my understanding that the Deputy Commissioner of
the Northwest Territories appeared before the N.W.T. Water Board
on September 6, 1976 and expressed the Territorial Government's
views supporting the use of Kam Lake as a sewage lagoon for the
City of Yellowknife.

My department has no objection to this from a health
standpoint but we have firm objections on health grounds to the
dumping of primary treated sewage (ground up sewage) into
Yellowknife Bay opposite Dettah, the native village. This
objection applies even if the effluent is chlorinated. We do
not believe that chlorination of primary treated sewage will
eliminate harmful bacteria, viruses or intestinal parasites and
cysts. We know that in summer the volume of water flowing from
the Yellowknife River is not sufficient to produce significant
flushing action on Yellowknife Bay.

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The Honourable Warren Allmand, P.C., M.P.

The water in Yellowknife Bay is used by the residents of Dettah and intermittently at times of heavy demand water from the Bay is pumped into the watermains of the City of Yellowknife by pumps which operate automatically when pressure falls.

Sewage lagoons have functioned well in the Northwest Territories and operational costs are low. At Yellowknife, Niven Lake has continued to perform satisfactorily even though loaded well beyond its capacity.

Commissioner Hodgson points out that the Territorial Council and the Administration must set priorities and that there are places other than Yellowknife where safe disposal of sewage constitutes a more serious problem. The more expensive methods of sewage disposal are not always more suitable in northern latitudes. Even simple dilution may be an appropriate method of disposal in some locations such as Resolute Bay where ocean currents could assist in the removal of low volume effluents deposited well off shore.

The Commissioner's letter is commendable.

Yours truly,

Original Signed By
MARC LALONDE

Marc Lalonde.

Encl.

WHF/cw
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