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MEMORANDUM

NOTE DE SERVICE

Director General
Program Management
Medical Services Branch

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FROM
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Regional Director
Northwest Territories Region

ACTION		PA	DATE
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INFORMATION			

SECURITY - CLASSIFICATION - DE SÉCURITÉ
OUR FILE - N/RÉFÉRENCE 151-1-5-N (N1)
YOUR FILE - V/RÉFÉRENCE
DATE March 23 1976

SUBJECT
OBJET

ARSENIC ENVIRONMENTAL POLLUTION - YELLOWKNIFE AREA

I have pleasure in enclosing for your information a copy of the minutes of the standing committee on arsenic pollution in Yellowknife dated January 16th 1976. You will remember that this is the "Parker" committee.

F. J. Covill

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

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MERCHANDISING NOTE DE SERVICE

MINUTES OF STANDING COMMITTEE ON ARSENIC POLLUTION
IN YELLOWKNIFE
January 16th, 1976

<u>Present:</u> Vern Christensen	EPS, Yellowknife
Bob Martin	EPS, Yellowknife
Arthur Redshaw	Water Management, DINA, Yellowknife
Dave Gemmill	EPS, Yellowknife
Mel Brown	DINA, Yellowknife
Robert McDermid	Health Care Plan, GNWT
A.K. Hazra	EPS, Edmonton
Wayne Bryant	EPS, Yellowknife
Allen Patrick	NNR & EB, Yellowknife
Dr. C. Forrest	Northern Health Service, Yellowknife
Dr. R.D. Eaton	National Health & Welfare, Edmonton
Mayor Fred Hennie	City of Yellowknife
D. Billing	Environmental Protection Officer, GNWT
 <u>Absent:</u> Hal Pawson	 NWT Chamber of Mines

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The meeting was called to order by the Chairman, Mr. Dan Billing, Environmental Protection Officer for the Territorial Government at 1330 hours.

1) Minutes of Last Meeting

Reading of the previous was waived.

2) Summer Testing Results

The Chairman invited Mr. W. Bryant to comment on the University of Alberta report. Mr. Bryant stated that the tabled report contained the bulk of last summer's testing results but that the report was

unsatisfactory to him and he asked for its withdrawal. He further stated that an overview of the numerous testing activities should be made and co-ordinated.

Chairman agrees, the aim is to accumulate enough information to finalize the exercise.

3) Listing of Reports

A.K. Hazra listed a series of reports for which EPS is responsible. There are four main areas:

- 1) ambient air (dust fog, SO₂, Mercury)
- 2) snow aspects
- 3) stack samplings (stack emissions)
- 4) soils and vegetation

Chairman - what other results must be added to complete the list? After discussion, it was resolved that the following were also needed.

- a) fish flesh
- b) lake water
- c) tap water
- d) birds
- 3) small mammals

The University of Alberta Report cast doubt on the accuracy of past fish sampling. W. Bryant will check it out.

A. Redshaw confirmed that the routine testing of tap water had been interrupted during the summer because of misunderstanding with the City but has now been resumed.

Chairman stated that bird and mammal sampling would be done by the Government of the Northwest Territories.

A discussion ensued on likely conditions during run-off. Snow samples seem to indicate that a heavy degree of contamination will occur in melt order.

4) Ingestion of Arsenic Through Water Supply

Dr. Eaton stated that test results on humans have indicated no statistical correlation with water supply.

5) Forms of Arsenic

Chairman - two principal forms of arsenic:

- arsenic tri-oxide, highly toxic
- arsenic pent-oxide, relatively insoluble

6) Public Warning During Run-Off

This question was left to the next meeting at which time complete results will be available.

7) University of Alberta Report

Various criticisms were made on the report which were noted by W. Bryant for his use in amendment. Mayor Hennie spoke on the importance of testing of ptarmigan and rabbits and further suggestions that it might be useful to test local work-dogs since they live exclusively on local fish.

8) Preparation of Final Report

After much discussion it was agreed that the Committee would ask for the services of Jack Grainge from National Health and Welfare in correlating results and preparing a final report and that Dave Gimmell would work with him. Chairman to follow up.

9) Further Human Testing

Dr. Eaton said that Dr. Forrest will be going to the management of Giant to suggest a schedule of further tests for workmen in contaminated areas but that no mechanism exists for finding persons who have left Yellowknife.

10) Wind-borne Contamination - CON Mine

Discussions took place regarding the possibility of wind-blown dry sediments at CON.

M. Brown stated that his section was undertaking work on this problem and that test will be made this summer in an effort to solve it. B. Martin suggests that high concentration areas should be marked. M. Brown agreed to look into it.

11) Cyanide Contamination

A discussion took place regarding the storage of cyanide and the disposal of cyanide drums. R. McDermitt expressed concern and the Chairman was instructed to investigate and bring a report.

The Committee adjourned at 16:00 hours at which time it was agreed to come together again with complete test results in time for a public meeting before break-up.