

Aniak sample taken for PCB test

From The Tundra Drums

Bethel — Blood samples were taken from six Aniak residents last week to determine if they have been poisoned by PCBs (polychlorinated biphenyls), a toxic chemical.

The samples were collected by Dr. John Middaugh, the state epidemiologist, who sent them on to the Center for Disease Control in Atlanta, Ga.

The history of the people's contact with the hazardous waste was included among the material sent to Georgia.

According to Bruce Erickson, an environmental engineer with the state Department of Environmental Conservation, whether or not further testing will be required depends on the results of the center's analysis.

He said the center will look for evidence of liver dysfunction or a certain type of acne associated with exposure to PCBs.

Erickson said the six from whom blood was taken are people believed to have come into closest contact with the hazardous chemical during the PCB clean-up effort in Aniak, conducted over the past several years.

That effort was organized by the DEC and by the United States Air Force following the 1979 shut-down of the Air Force's White Alice telecommunications station in that mid-Kuskokwim community.