Cow Island skeptical of DHH study

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COW ISLAND — Etta Langlinais did her own study of cancer cases in her community. She went door-to-door this fall, surveying her neighbors, asking them about their illnesses.

"In a 2- to 2 1/2-mile strip of road, there were about 23 people who had cancer," Langlinais said.

So when Langlinais learned Thursday that a state study of cancer in the area showed no increased cancer risk that could be linked to arsenic in their drinking water, she was skeptical.

"We went around in our community," Langlinais said. "It's not numbers we made up."

The Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals released the results of its study Thursday at a community meeting of about 50 people. It showed that the people in Cow Island's zip code were more likely to get some cancers, and less likely to get others. But overall, the study showed no significant difference in cancer rates in that area compared to the parish and the state, and no significant difference for types of cancers linked specifically to arsenic exposure — bladder, kidney and liver.

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Study: Some cancers more prevalent in area

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COW ISLAND — In the zip code that includes Cow Island, white women have gotten non-Hodgkins lymphoma and liver cancer at higher rates than the rest of the state. That's according to a study the state Department of Health and Hospitals spent the past few months compiling. The study compared cancer rates for Vermilion Parish and the state to rates for three zip codes — 70510, Abbeville and Cow Island, 70548, Kaplan and other areas, and 70530, a portion of Lafayette.

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