NEW YORK (AP) — People who work in the Louisiana shipbuilding industry run an almost twice normal chance of dying from lung cancer, a new study concludes.

The study, by researchers at Tulane University and the National Cancer Institute, found elevated lung cancer risks for older people of Acadian ancestry and people who lived near oil refineries.

The study was based on death certificates from 19 Louisiana parishes. It appeared in December's Journal of the National Cancer Institute.

The summary is that we have an increased incidence of lung cancer. Some part of it is probably due to occupation, and we have to look further to see why," said Dr. Marise S. Gottlieb, associate professor of medicine and epidemiology at Tulane and head of the study.

The researchers obtained death certificates for 3,327 persons who died of lung cancer in the 19 parishes from 1960 to 1975. Parishes were selected because they had high lung cancer rates in earlier studies, or because they had heavy chemical, petroleum or paper industry. "Of the 19 parishes, 17 had mortality rates that exceeded the national average," the study said.

The researchers then assembled a control group of 3,327 persons who were of the same sex and race, roughly the same age, lived in the same parish and died at about the same time, but died of other causes besides lung cancer.

Since most death certificates showed the deceased's occupation, it was possible to compare whether people were more likely to die of lung cancer if they had worked in certain jobs.

The study found that persons who worked in manufacturing, transportation equipment, which Mrs. Jackson, Tensas, Concordia, Allen, Calcasieu, Acadian, St. Martin, Iberville, Ascension, St. James, St. John the Baptist, St. Charles, Terrebonne, St. Bernard and Plaquemines.

Persons in the fishing industry were found to be 1.8 times as likely to die of lung cancer, Mrs. Gottlieb said, saying that is almost entirely shipbuilding, were 2.2 times as likely to die of lung cancer as controls. Other studies have linked the lung cancer to exposure to asbestos, she said.

People who lived near chemical refineries had smaller but still elevated risks of lung cancer, the study found.

There was no extra lung cancer risk found among those who lived near chemical plants, but Mrs. Gottlieb said that may be because it was hard to distinguish between petroleum and chemical plants from death certificate information.

She said a later but unpublished analysis showed elevated risk for proximity to chemical plants too.

The researchers also tried to determine whether the people who had died were of Acadian ancestry by comparing their names with "updated variants of original Acadian settlers as recorded on ships' logs." They identified groups of "probable," "possible" and unlikely Acadian ancestry.

Among those of "probable" Acadian ancestry, which made up about 6 percent of the total, there was no lung cancer association for younger persons. But for people who died at age 63 or older, Acadian men died of lung cancer about 1.5 times as often as non-Acadian men while Acadian women died of lung cancer twice as often as non-Acadian women.

The finding suggests there's something in Acadians' genes that makes them more vulnerable to lung cancer, but Mrs. Gottlieb said the problem must be studied further to be sure.

"The clues obtained by this study may now be tested by case-control studies in high-risk communities of Louisiana, where no more definitive information can be obtained from interviews with lung cancer patients or their next of kin," the study said.

The parishes studied were Webster, Morehouse, Jackson, TENSA, Concordia, Feliciana, Washington, Allen, Calcasieu, Acadian, St. Martin, Iberville, Ascension, St. James, St. John the Baptist, St. Charles, Terrebonne, St. Bernard and Plaquemines.