

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

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March 18, 2010

Lisa Jackson, Administrator
Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 20460

Dear Administrator Jackson:

In 1982, a Draft Initial Assessment Study of the potable water wells at Camp LeJeune in North Carolina indicated that there was sufficient evidence to suspect that the installation was contaminated and a confirmation study was warranted. Subsequent sampling of water supply well 602 in 1984 revealed unacceptable levels of benzene in the drinking water supply, and the well was closed. The source of the benzene was a leaking fuel tank farm in a site known as the Hadnot Point Industrial Area that was up gradient from the well. The well also contained the toxic chemicals trichloroethylene (TCE) and dichloroethylene (DCE).¹

Over the next several years, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) played a key role in assessing the areas of contamination at Camp LeJeune and developing plans with the Department of the Navy and the Marine Corps for the clean-up of the contaminated sites under both the Comprehensive Environmental Response Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA) and the Resource Recovery and Compensation Act (RCRA) and through the underground storage tank program of the State of North Carolina. In 1985, EPA told the Navy that there was "sufficient data" to indicate potential extensive contamination of groundwater in several areas of Camp LeJeune, and that it should be immediately considered for inclusion on the National Priorities List (NPL) under the Superfund program.² EPA placed the base on the NPL in 1989.³

For the past two years, the Subcommittee has been reviewing the scientific studies on the human health effects of toxic exposure conducted by the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR). This review has included a continuing evaluation of ATSDR's work in evaluating the health effects to Marines and their families of exposure to toxic substances while in service at Camp LeJeune. ATSDR's most notable product was a public health

¹ "Evaluation of Data from First Round of Verification Sample Collection and Analysis: Confirmation Study to Determine Existence and Possible Migration of Specific Chemicals *in Situ*, Marine Corps Base, Camp Lejeune, North Carolina" Environmental Science and Engineering, Inc., Gainesville, Florida, January 1985, pp. 2-35 and 2-38. General Account Office, "Defense Health Care: Activities Related to Past Drinking Water Contamination, GAO-07-276, May 2007, p. 27.

² There were 46 sites at Camp LeJeune that EPA and the Navy eventually selected for remediation which involved both soil and water contamination. Testimony of Franklin Hill, director, Superfund Division, EPA Region 4, before the Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee, Energy and Commerce Committee, June 12, 2007, p. 4.

³ Hill Testimony, *supra*, p. 3.

assessment completed in 1997. However, the study did not include the potential human health effects of benzene contamination of the drinking water consumed by U.S. Marines and their families. In April 2009, ATSDR withdrew its 1997 study partially because it failed to address the potential human health effects of exposures to benzene on this population.⁴

There have been numerous reports of unusual levels of leukemia and other cancers, still births and birth defects among former LeJeune residents. In order to understand why the potential human health effects of exposure to benzene at Camp LeJeune were not studied, it is important to review the role of all federal agencies involved.

Therefore, pursuant to Rules X and XI of the United States House of Representatives and Rule 3 (a) (5) of the Committee on Science and Technology, I am requesting that EPA provide the following records, as defined in the Attachment, to the Subcommittee:

1. All records relating to the Hadnot Point Industrial Area; the Hadnot Point Fuel Farm; POL Facilities; ground tanks S-1009 and S-1031; Supply Well 602 (sometimes referred to as HP 602); benzene, TCE and DCE contamination in Supply Well 602; and potential human health effects of exposure to benzene, TCE and DCE.
2. All records relating to remediation of Hadnot Point Industrial Area and the contaminated soil and ground water affected by the leaking fuel tanks.
3. All records relating to the decision by EPA to exclude the deep water aquifer which was the water source for Supply Well 602 from the CERCLA and/or RCRA remediation plans for Camp LeJeune.
4. All records relating to the remediation of the Hadnot Point Industrial Area and related soil and ground water affected by the leaking fuel tanks that was undertaken by the State of North Carolina.
5. All records relating to the 1997 study done by ATSDR on potential human health impacts from exposure to toxic substances at Camp LeJeune, its subsequent withdrawal, and any revised study
6. All records relating to communications concerning the topics listed in (1), (2) and (3) above with officials of Camp LeJeune, U.S. Navy, U.S. Marine Corps, the State of North Carolina, the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry, the General Accounting Office; Michael Baker Corporation and/or Baker Environmental, O'Brien and Gere, and Environmental Sciences and Engineering (ESE).

⁴ ATSDR, "May 8, 2009 Update to 2007 Camp LeJeune Public Health Assessment Study," assessed at http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/HAC/PHA/usmclejeune/clej_toc.html

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Please deliver copies of these records to the Subcommittee offices in Room B-374, Rayburn House Office Building, by 5 p.m. on Tuesday, April 6, 2010. If your staff has any questions or needs additional information, please contact Edith Holleman, Subcommittee counsel, at (202) 225-8459 or Douglas Pasternak, Subcommittee professional staff member, at (202) 226-8892.

Your prompt attention to this matter is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brad Miller", written in a cursive style.

BRAD MILLER
Chairman
Subcommittee on Investigations and Oversight

Attachment

cc: Rep. Paul Broun
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Investigations and Oversight

ATTACHMENT

1. The term "records" is to be construed in the broadest sense and shall mean any written or graphic material, however produced or reproduced, of any kind or description, consisting of the original and any non-identical copy (whether different from the original because of notes made on or attached to such copy or otherwise) and drafts and both sides thereof, whether printed or recorded electronically or magnetically or stored in any type of data bank, including, but not limited to, the following: correspondence, memoranda, records, summaries of personal conversations or interviews, minutes or records of meetings or conferences, opinions or reports of consultants, projections, statistical statements, drafts, contracts, agreements, purchase orders, invoices, confirmations, telegraphs, telexes, agendas, books, notes, pamphlets, periodicals, reports, studies, evaluations, opinions, logs, diaries, desk calendars, appointment books, tape recordings, video recordings, e-mails, voice mails, computer tapes, or other computer stored matter, magnetic tapes, microfilm, microfiche, punch cards, all other records kept by electronic, photographic, or mechanical means, charts, photographs, notebooks, drawings, plans, inter-office communications, intra-office and intra-departmental communications, transcripts, checks and canceled checks, bank statements, ledgers, books, records or statements of accounts, and papers and things similar to any of the foregoing, however denominated.
2. The terms "relating," "relate," or "regarding" as to any given subject means anything that constitutes, contains, embodies, identifies, deals with, or is in any manner whatsoever pertinent to that subject, including but not limited to records concerning the preparation of other records.