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While students in kindergarten, preschool and the Head Start program — who are the most at-risk in regard to elevated blood lead levels — do not take music classes, they are the only students who will be tested Friday at the school.

Onslow County Health Director Danny Jacob said...  
Nixon, an environmental health specialist, discovered the high levels during a routine inspection of the school in January.

SEE SCHOOL/2A



**Music building:** The lead was detected in chipped paint and soil around the structure

THE DAILY NEWS/DON BRYAN

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# Contamination at Brinson Creek is probed

BY C. MARK BRINKLEY  
DAILY NEWS STAFF

## High readings of arsenic, lead & mercury

Increased levels of arsenic, lead and mercury have been discovered in wildlife from Jacksonville's Brinson Creek, Camp Lejeune officials said Tuesday, but the reason for the contamination is still under investigation.

The creek, which borders Camp Geiger and the Georgetown area, is located near a hazardous waste site aboard

base that was used for about 40 years as a fuel depository.

"Our epidemiology section will get with Camp Lejeune to get a little more information," said Debbie Crane, spokeswoman for the state Department of Environment, Health and Natural Resources. "The next step would be to decide whether they need to issue a health advisory or not.

"It's premature and misleading to be drawing any conclusions right now that there is any problem," Crane added.

Crane said state health officials will have to first contact base inspectors to find out how many samples were taken before they can proceed.

"One or two samples out of 200 is not statistically enough," she said. "You're always going

to have some not fish. That's not a problem. We have to find out if there's enough sampling there and then what kind of conclusions to draw from it."

The levels were discovered during a routine check by Baker Environmental Inc., a Pennsylvania-based firm that has been assessing hazardous waste sites for the base since 1989.

SEE CREEK/2A

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Wed Mar 12 1997  
Jacksonville Daily News

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GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION

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women was a  
"Ra never been an  
issue in this investigation at all.  
It is an investigation of sin, not  
skin," he said.

After the news conference,  
the base said an eighth ser-  
geant at Aberdeen had been  
charged with rape on Monday,  
bringing to 14 the number of  
officers there accused of sex  
crimes. The base declined to di-  
vulge his race, or say whether  
the charges resulted from the  
women's statements.

Army Secretary Togo West,  
speaking with reporters briefly  
on the Pentagon steps, said: "I  
think we need to let these al-  
legations be dealt with in the  
criminal proceedings first, and  
thereafter is the time to deter-  
mine whether there is anything  
further to look at as well."

Pvt. Toni Moreland, who last  
week became the only recruit  
to disavow her statement, told  
reporters she felt pressured  
into agreeing with allegations



ASSOCIATED PRESS

### Recant claims: Female recruits support each other by holding hands during their news conference

made by the military's Criminal Investigation Division.

"I would just agree. They put it down on paper. All I did was sign it," said Moreland, 21, of St. Louis.

Pvt. Daria Hornberger, 30, of Oklahoma, said she never told investigators she had been raped, but while being ques-

tioned, they told her the sexual misconduct she described was rape under the uniform code of military justice.

"I have a lot, a lot to lose by being here," Hornberger said. "I have a family, I have children. And I could just keep my mouth shut and this would all go over, but something really

### CREEK/FROM 1A

The firm found arsenic levels in fish to be 1.8-parts per million, lead levels to be 2.5-parts per million and mercury levels to be 1.3-parts per million. Although no mercury levels were found in the crabs, arsenic levels registered 1.4-parts per million and lead levels were .6-parts per million.

In comparison, the arsenic content in the average crab is 5-parts per million, one-fourth of the fish sold on the open market have five times the amount of arsenic that the Brinson Creek fish have, and lead levels in water have to be less than 15-parts per million to be considered fit for consumption.

While no levels appeared high enough to cause public concern, an official declaration will come from the state health director's office after the investigation is completed. Even if no health advisory is issued, the contamination source will have to be found.

The current source is unknown at this time. We can't

even say that the contamination is a result of contamination contributed from Camp Lejeune or the City of Jacksonville," Neal Paul, director of Camp Lejeune's Installation Restoration division, said adding that the fish could have migrated and the problem could be from somewhere else. "We just don't know."

However, Paul believes the problem could be coming from the former fuel depository.

"It very likely could be," Paul said, adding that the depository was dismantled in 1995. "Some of the lead contamination could be from the gasoline that was stored at this fuel farm, but that doesn't explain the arsenic and the mercury."

Another possible reason was brought to light by a Naval Criminal Investigative Service investigation. In their notification to the state of the problem, base officials said the contamination could have come from some waste material from Camp Lejeune that was improperly disposed of.

"The NCIS investigation disclosed that sandblast grit was improperly tested and illegally transported from the Courthouse Bay area," the notice stated. "This sandblast grit was moved to an area along Brinson Creek and utilized as part of a construction project for the City of Jacksonville."

"We feel it could be a potential source of contamination," Paul said, unable to comment further about the details of the NCIS investigation. Base officials refused to comment further on the grit, believed to have been used to sandblast equipment returning from Desert Storm, and would not release the name of the contracting company involved.

Apparently, the grit was later used by another contractor to complete a city project in the Georgetown area of Jacksonville.

"I presume (the contractor) believes he sold the city clean fill and that he bought clean fill. I don't know anything other than that right at this time,"

said Tony Patm.

Army spokesman Kenneth Bacon said the issue was "whether or not there was an improper consensual sexual relationship" between women recruits and superiors. Sex between superiors and trainees is strictly prohibited.

The five women refused to say Tuesday if they had consensual sex with any instructors. An Army source, however, told The Associated Press that all five women admitted to having consensual sex with superiors in their sworn statements.

The source said two of the women said they had sex with one serviceman who has not been charged, while the other three women said they had consensual sex with one serviceman who has been charged.

Several women also said they were upset that the military has not kept promises, such as grants of immunity, made for their cooperation.

Jacksonville City Manager Jerry Bittner said. "All I know is that we are going to cooperate with NCIS and DEHNR and do what's required to find out the extent of this contaminated material being used as a part of a city project.

"If there is remedial work involved, the city will be ensuring that that remedial work is done at someone else's expense, other than the city."

It is the second time this month that improper waste disposal practices have been linked to contractors hired by Camp Lejeune, which has spent more than \$50 million investigating and cleaning up its hazardous waste sites.

The first came last week after the state groundwater division issued a field violation to Jacksonville-based Onslow Environmental Contractors for disposal of waste without a permit. Investigators found apparent soil contamination at the site, which they believe could have come from used petroleum tanks stored on the property, leaking materials.

also collected and sent to the state. Laboratory of Public Health in Raleigh, she said.

She said the levels of lead in the paint were 25 percent with the limit being .5 percent. The levels found in the soil were 4,000 with the limit being 400.

Superintendent Ron Singletary and Richlands Elementary Principal Ed Herring were notified, and the building — which was constructed in the 1930s and is used for music classes, storage and the physical education and foreign language offices — was sealed off by a fence. Soil surrounding the area was covered in plastic.

Jacob said there are no reported cases of children with high blood lead levels in Onslow County. Chances of the children most at-risk being exposed to the paint chips are minimal.

Herring said children in kindergarten, preschool and Head Start are led in single-file lines to every activity, and there would be no opportunity for them to get near the building.

Students in first through fifth grades were taking music classes in the building, which is located to the left of the playground and in front of the soccer fields used by the Richlands Soccer League.

Letters and permission slips were sent home Monday to the parents of the estimated 240 students at-risk. Parents with children in first through fifth grades were sent letters Tuesday, and the head of the Richlands Soccer League was also notified.

On Friday, 18 nurses from the health department will be at the school to administer the "finger stick" test to the younger students. Parents will be allowed to stay with their children during the test. Blood specimens will then be sent to Raleigh with results expected back in four weeks.

If parents with a child in first

### WRECK/FROM 1A

apparently coming out of a curve when he lost control of the vehicle.