

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

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March 9, 2010

Bradley Mallory, President
Michael Baker Corporation
Airside Business Park
200 Airside Dr.
Moon Township, Pennsylvania 15108

Dear Mr. Mallory:

It is our understanding that your company was involved in the risk assessment and clean-up of contamination from the Hadnot Point fuel farm at the Marine base at Camp LeJeune in North Carolina.¹ The fuel tanks had been leaking for decades, and some of the contaminants had reached the drinking water supply for Marines and their families who were living on the base in the 1970s and 1980s. In 1984, an environmental engineering company found 380 parts per billion of benzene, a carcinogen, in a drinking water supply well and recommended its immediate closure. The Environmental Protection Agency had established anything over 5 parts per billion in water as dangerous to human health.

It appears that in 1993, after another company had already tested for volatile organic compounds in the water supply wells and reported extremely high levels of benzene in one of the wells and also in the water treatment plant, Michael Baker Corporation completed the "draft final interim remedial action focused feasibility study" for the shallow aquifer at Hadnot Point. Raymond Wattras, who is currently Baker's assistant vice president for environmental services, appears to have been in charge of that project and subsequent remediation efforts. Baker's final 1994 report on the proposed remediation did not refer to the benzene contamination. Later health effects studies done by the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) and the General Accounting Office (GAO) also did not address benzene exposure from the drinking water.

For the past two years, the Investigations and Oversight Subcommittee has been reviewing scientific studies on the human health effects of toxic exposures conducted by the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR). This review has included ATSDR's roll in evaluating health effects from toxic exposures for Marines and their families while stationed at Camp LeJeune.

¹ See, e.g., Maurer, Kevin, "Report on Marines' Water Omitted Cancer Chemical," *Associated Press Online*, Feb. 17, 2010; Malloy, Daniel, "Agency Says Military Base Water Tainted," *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, Feb. 21, 2010

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As stated above, ATSDR did not consider benzene exposures in its 1997 report on Camp Lejeune. According to the Subcommittee's sources, ATSDR only recently discovered documents produced by Marine Corps contractors that identified fuel compounds in the aquifers of Camp LeJeune. The Subcommittee is attempting to determine why ATSDR failed to consider the potential health effects from exposure to benzene in conducting their evaluations of Camp LeJeune or in designing future studies related to tracking health effects in exposed individuals. In order to understand these events and what information ATSDR had access to at the time they wrote their 1997 report, it is important that we understand the role played by the Michael Baker Corporation as an environmental contractor to the Marine Corps at Camp LeJeune.

Therefore, by this letter, I am requesting that you produce to the Subcommittee all records, as defined in the enclosed attachment, in your possession relating to all work performed by Michael Baker Corporation related to the study and remediation of the water and soil contamination in both the shallow and deep aquifers at Camp LeJeune.

These records should be delivered to the Subcommittee offices in the Rayburn House Office Building, Room B-374, by 5 p.m. on Wednesday, March 31, 2010. If your staff has any questions or need additional information, please contact Edith Holleman, Subcommittee staff 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,



BRAD MILLER
Chairman
Subcommittee on Investigations and Oversight

Attachment

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