



Centers for Disease Control
and Prevention (CDC)
Atlanta, GA 30341-3724

January 14, 2011

Mr. Richard Mach
Environmental Director
1000 Navy Pentagon, Room 4A67-4
Washington D.C. 20350-1000

Brigadier General Robert R. Ruark
Assistant Deputy Commandant, Installations and Logistics
3000 Marine Corps, Pentagon, Room 4E516
Washington, D. C. 20350-3000

Dear Mr. Mach and BGen Ruark :

I am writing to finalize the joint communications agreement regarding USMC Base Camp Lejeune. Our current Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with DON/USMC requires that we establish a joint set of procedures relating to communications. This element of the MOU was inserted at the request of DON/USMC and reads:

7.5 The timely public release of scientifically and technically accurate information is essential to the success of this project and this MOU. ATSDR and DON agree to establish procedures to ensure that information intended for release has been shared between both parties. ATSDR and DON agree to provide comments on draft materials when appropriate and to respond to such comments.

ATSDR is committed to transparent and open communications with DON/USMC and with the affected public. The draft *Procedure for Public Release of Information Related to Camp Lejeune, North Carolina Work Conducted by the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry, the United States Marine Corps, and/or the Department of Navy* was sent to USMC in the fall of 2009 for the purpose of adding DON/USMC points of contact. A revised version was sent to DON/USMC in September 2010. Unfortunately, approval of these draft procedures has stalled within the DON/USMC.

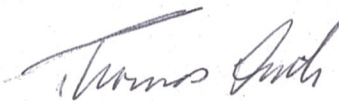
In the meantime, the USMC developed and distributed - *Camp Lejeune Historic Drinking Water: Questions and Answers*. Despite the existing MOU, ATSDR was neither informed nor provided the opportunity to review or comment. The DON/USMC booklet does not represent the role or position of ATSDR. It understates the potential hazards from the contaminated drinking water and may discourage individuals from participating in planned research studies. We relayed to you some of our concerns on September 10, 2010. This

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sentence remains particularly problematic ... "To date, the scientific community has not established an association between exposure to the contaminated water and health conditions reported by former residents of Camp Lejeune." The sentence is misleading. It suggests there is no problem. ATSDR health assessments have documented the existence of a past public health hazard due to volatile organic compounds in drinking water. The only completed epidemiologic study to date used birth records rather than reports from former residents. It did identify an association between Small for Gestational Age and sub-groupings of mothers exposed to PCE. The presence of known human carcinogens in drinking water support a much more cautious and informative message being conveyed. We request that the booklet be withdrawn from your website and distribution.

As of this date, ATSDR will embrace the draft procedures as though they have been finalized. We expect that the DON/USMC will similarly abide by these procedures. It is essential that we work collaboratively as we move to complete our research at USMC Base Camp Lejeune. Should the DON/USMC wish to distribute materials to the affected public, the materials should be shared with ATSDR for review and comment. Until the health survey has been completed, all communications with the affected population should be carefully coordinated with ATSDR.

Sincerely yours;



Thomas H. Sinks, Ph.D.
Deputy Director, National Center for
Environmental Health, and
Agency for Toxic Substances and
Disease Registry