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SUBJECT

**STUDY OF DRINKING WATER CONTAMINATION
AND CHILDHOOD CANCER AT MCB CAMP LEJEUNE, NC**

BACKGROUND

The Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) conducted a Public Health Assessment (PHA) per CERCLA section 104. The PHA found evidence of long-term Trichloroethylene (TCE) and Tetrachlorethylene (PCE) contamination in Camp Lejeune's potable water supply prior to 1985. The contaminated well was shut down in 1985. A recent study in Woburn, MA found increases in leukemia risk among children whose mothers drank well water contaminated with TCE and PCE during their pregnancies. Consequently, ATSDR has requested \$1.9 million to conduct a study of childhood leukemia in the Lejeune population since the well had supplied drinking water to housing areas on the base.

DISCUSSION

The current potable water supply at Camp Lejeune meets all health standards and is monitored on a semi-annual basis. The contaminated well was taken off-line in 1985. It appears that a significant amount of the contamination originated off-base by a dry cleaning facility now on EPA's Superfund List.

ATSDR's Public Health Assessment for Marine Corp Base Camp Lejeune was recently released to the public. The release generated a newspaper article in the local press and television coverage in the local area.

To date, two individuals have contacted Camp Lejeune regarding abnormalities in their children. One individual, who lived in the housing area at MCB Camp Lejeune during the early 80's, had a young child die of leukemia in 1985. Another woman who lived at Camp Lejeune during that time had two children born with birth defects.

The Navy Environmental Health Center reviewed the ATSDR proposal and found insufficient evidence to warrant a full-scale epidemiological study. NEHC has proposed a pilot study in lieu of the full-scale ATSDR study. This was presented to the Armed Forces Epidemiological Board at Walter Reed Army Institute of Research on August 22. The Board supports the pilot study.

A meeting between Navy, Marine Corps and ATSDR is schedule for 8 Sept 97 to discuss these issues.

RECOMMENDATION

None. For Information Only

OPTIONAL FORM 99 (7-90)

FAX TRANSMITTAL

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