



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY  
HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS  
2 NAVY ANNEX  
WASHINGTON, DC 20380-1775

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LF  
March 11, 2010

Mr. Steve Ford  
The People's Forum  
PO Box 191  
Raleigh, NC 27602

RE: 9 MARCH 2010 ARTICLE REGARDING CAMP LEJEUNE, NC

Dear Mr. Ford,

Please allow me the opportunity to set the record straight on several of the issues covered in your March 9, 2010 article concerning Camp Lejeune historic drinking water. This and other recent articles published by McClatchy Newspapers and the AP contain many inaccuracies that confuse an already complex issue.

First, I want to assure the public, without any reservation, that the drinking water at Camp Lejeune is safe. We have and will continue to comply with all Federal drinking water standards. It is critical to note that when we received notification of the benzene detection in 1984, the well was immediately shut down, and has never again been used.

Your article suggests that the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) did not have access to reports that documented benzene contamination at a well in Camp Lejeune. In fact, ATSDR did have access to the benzene information. We know this because the benzene detection was referenced in a 1994 draft of ATSDR's Camp Lejeune Public Health Assessment, and also in a subsequent study. The benzene detection also has been publicly available in the Onslow County Library since 1992, and online since 1999.

The Marine Corps has made every effort to ensure that all information in our possession is available to ATSDR researchers and we will continue to do so. We are absolutely committed to using the best science to get our Marines and Sailors, their family members, and former residents the answers they deserve.

Semper fidelis,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "E. G. Payne", is written over the typed name.

E. G. PAYNE  
Major General, USMC  
Assistant Deputy Commandant  
Installations and Logistics (Facilities)