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UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS
MARINE CORPS BASE
CAMP LEJEUNE, NORTH CAROLINA 28542-5001

IN REPLY REFER TO:
6286
BEMD
19 APR 1993

Mr. Peter Burger
North Carolina Department of Environment,
Health, and Natural Resources
Division of Solid Waste Management
Superfund Section
Post Office Box 27687
Raleigh, North Carolina 27611-7687

Dear Mr. Burger:

The following is a chronological summary of the events concerning claims made by Mr. Roger Johnson of alleged Agent Orange burial activities at Marine Corps Base, Camp Lejeune and his professed exposure to Agent Orange.

a. On November 3, 1992, at 1:00 p.m., the Environmental Management Department, Marine Corps Base, Camp Lejeune, received notification, from the U.S. Coast Guard, Marine Safety Office, Wilmington, North Carolina, that a former Camp Lejeune Marine, Mr. Roger Johnson, had contacted the National Response Center regarding his participation in an alleged Agent Orange burial activity on Marine Corps Base, Camp Lejeune in 1974 and/or 1975.

b. On November 4, 1992, Major Thorn, Deputy Staff Judge Advocate, contacted Mr. Johnson who would only allude to the site location but not reveal it. He explained that he was one of 15 Marines detailed to the "top secret" project, which was under the command of a Colonel Bradford. According to Mr. Johnson, during the alleged disposal activity, three barrels were either punctured or spilled, and he was contaminated with what he believed to be Agent Orange, resulting in his deteriorating spinal condition. He also claimed that subsequent to the burial of 8,000 drums in an underground concrete vault, there was a three story BEQ constructed on the site. Mr. Johnson wished to receive medical treatment for his spinal condition through the Veterans Administration and expressed his intention of using the information he had regarding the alleged Agent Orange site as leverage to obtain this treatment. Major Thorn also noted that Mr. Johnson frequently rambled about his supposed personal meetings with General Gray, former Commandant of the Marine Corps, and Lieutenant Colonel Oliver North.

c. On November 9, 1992, Mr. Johnson, who was again contacted by Major Thorn, stated that if he did not receive his requested medical treatment, he would report the location of the alleged burial activity to the news media. Furthermore, he claimed that

6286
BEMD
19 APR 1993

two additional burial sites exist on Camp Lejeune, one underneath the Naval Hospital, and the other beneath "Barracks #1209". Investigations by the Environmental Management Department, Facilities Department, Occupational Health and Preventative Medicine Services, as well as the Naval Investigative Service (NIS), concluded that these claims were unfounded.

d. On November 28, 1992, Major Thorn once more contacted Mr. Johnson, who not only admitted to abusing alcohol, cocaine, and marijuana before, during, and after his service in the military, but also acknowledged to having been detained in a psychiatric facility. Mr. Johnson further stated that his brother-in-law, who was also supposedly exposed to Agent Orange, now stands only three feet tall and possesses a spine in the shape of a "C".

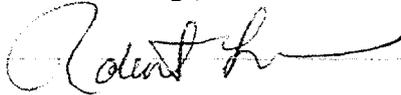
e. On February 11, 1993, the NIS stated that, having interviewed all pertinent command personnel and having reviewed associated records, they could not substantiate the claims made by Mr. Johnson. Therefore, the NIS concluded that it would no longer expend its resources with respect to this matter without additional relevant information surfacing.

Since the initial notification of the alleged Agent Orange burial activities, Camp Lejeune has employed various talents and resources from not only the Environmental Management Department, the Facilities Department, the Naval Hospital, and the Naval Investigative Service, but also the Base Public Affairs Office, the Base Staff Judge Advocate, and the Veterans Administration to assist Mr. Johnson and investigate his claims. Additionally, we have utilized the assets of the Center for Disease Control, the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry, and the Naval Facilities Engineering Command, Atlantic Division. We have been diligent in our efforts to inform and maintain current correspondence concerning this situation with the United States Environmental Protection Agency, Region IV, and the North Carolina Department of Environment, Health, and Natural Resources. Unfortunately, Mr. Johnson has been extremely uncooperative and has not only refused to disclose the alleged site location, but has also declined our offers to assist him with his Veterans Affairs matters. Absent any substantiation regarding Mr. Johnson's statements, Marine Corps Base, Camp Lejeune does not recognize the necessity of further investigation.

6286
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If you have any questions or comments, please contact Mr. Neal Paul, Director, Installation Restoration Division, Environmental Management Department, at telephone (919) 451-5872.

Sincerely,



ROBERT L. WARREN
Assistant Chief of Staff
Environmental Management
By direction of
the Commanding General

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→ LANTNAVFACENGCOM (1823)

EACO (LtCol Mercier)

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SJA