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From: Commanding General
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Encl: (1) Jacksonville Daily News Clipping of 14 June 1982
(2) Raleigh News and Observer News Clipping of 14 June 1982

1. As requested, enclosures (1) and (2) are forwarded for your information. These newspaper clippings address a problem identified by the subject program.

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Contamination forces closure of sitter service at Marine base

CAMP LEJEUNE (AP) — A baby-sitting service at Camp Lejeune has been ordered closed after tests showed pesticide contaminating the soil around the service building.

In March, surveys showed DDT at a level of 6.3 parts per million and chlordane at a level of 170 parts per billion in soil near the Staff-NCO Sitter Service. Local records indicate that the site was used for mixing insect-control chemicals in the 1940s.

A report prepared by the U.S. Naval Regional Energy and Environmental Support Activity of Port Hueneme, Calif., did not indicate at what level of contamination DDT and chlordane are considered a health hazard. Base commander Maj. Gen. Charles Cooper ordered the service closed as a precaution until information on the thresholds can be obtained from Port Hueneme.

So far, the baby-sitting service is the only site on Camp Lejeune where officials said they found evidence of contamination.

Because a second base sitting service must be expanded to accommodate the displaced children, the Staff-NCO Sitter Service will not close until Tuesday. Then, the eight employees and 65 children from Staff-NCO will be transferred to the Midway Park Sitter Service, also on the base.

Additional soil samples and air samples from inside the building have been collected and sent to the Port Hueneme facility for further tests.

Toxic chemicals found in soil at sitter service

A Staff Report

A Camp Lejeune baby-sitting service will be closed Tuesday because toxic chemicals have been found in the soil beneath the building housing the day-care facility.

Chlordane, DDT and two DDT derivatives, chemicals used for insect and pest control, were found by Navy Department inspectors in the soil beneath the Staff NCO Sitter Service at the corner of Holcomb and Brewster boulevards.

The site previously was used as a headquarters for mosquito-control activities on the base, according to the Joint Public Affairs Office, and the chemicals were mixed at the location for distribution to spray trucks.

Camp Lejeune officials waited until Tuesday to close the facility, the public-affairs office indicated, to provide time to expand the Midway Park sitter service to accommodate the 65 children and eight employees affected by the shutdown.

The presence of the chemicals was revealed in an initial report on soil samples taken from six inches beneath ground level at the sitter service. The report, prepared by the U.S. Naval Regional Energy and Environmental Support Activity, is part of a national survey required by law of all sites containing potentially hazardous waste.

A complete report on several toxic-waste sites at Lejeune is expected in August, although final results from the soil sample analysis from the sitter service site are expected in two or three weeks, according to the public-affairs office.

According to sketchy base records and the recollection of former base employees, the site was used to mix mosquito-control chemicals into the late 1950s and possibly as late as 1960.

Base inventory records indicate the building became a school in 1960 and was switched to a sitter service in 1967.

The initial soil sample report indicates 6.3 parts per million DDT was found six inches below ground level and 170 parts per billion chlordane were found.

Base officials do not know what levels of DDT and chlordane are considered hazardous to humans in samples taken from six inches below the soil, according to the public-affairs office.

The use of DDT, however, an abbreviation for the chemical dimethyl-dichloral-trichloral ethane, has been outlawed in the United States because of its lengthy adverse reaction on the environment and its potential as a cancer-causing substance.

Although its use has been severely restricted since chlordane was used at Lejeune for mosquito control, it is still a preferred chemical among many exterminators for use under buildings to control termites.

Both chemicals are heavily chlorinated hydrocarbons and as such, are highly toxic and suspected of causing cancer. The heavy chlorination results in a molecular bond that persists in the environment and does not easily break down for decomposition.

The public-affairs office indicated, however, that none of the children or employees have demonstrated any symptoms indicating a toxic reaction from any of the chemicals identified. There are no intentions at this time to medically examine any of the 73 people affected by the shutdown of the sitter service.

Base "officials have no firsthand knowledge of why the decision was made" to allow location of a school and the sitter service on the former mosquito-control chemical site.