Ms. Angela Canterbury  
Director of Public Policy  
Project on Governmental Oversight  
1100 G Street, N.W., Suite 900  
Washington, D.C. 20005

Dear Ms. Canterbury:

On behalf of Secretary Kathleen Sebelius, thank you for your letter regarding the investigations at United States Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune (Camp Lejeune), which are being conducted by the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR). I appreciate your concerns about our decision to redact information showing the location of current drinking water infrastructure from a recently released report.

On January 5, 2012, ATSDR received a letter from the United States Marine Corps (USMC)/Department of the Navy (DON) raising installation security concerns at Camp Lejeune if certain information was published. The letter asked that we “Review new information carefully to avoid releasing location information for active potable water wells, raw or treated potable water lines, water treatment plants with water storage tanks which may not be released to the public in coordinate, map, or other form.” On January 19, 2012, we released a report titled Chapter B: Geohydrologic Framework of the Brewster Boulevard and Castle Hayne Aquifer Systems and the Terawa Terrace Aquifer. In keeping with the USMC request, specific geographic locations of active drinking water infrastructure at Camp Lejeune were redacted from the report.

ATSDR takes the security of military personnel and installations very seriously. We do not have the expertise to assess military installation security. The redactions made are consistent with a U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) position related to security risks of active public drinking water infrastructure. The EPA has concluded that it is prudent to restrict from public dissemination the latitude and longitude of well intakes, source water areas, and source water assessment program data. Please be assured that the redacted report includes all scientifically essential information relevant to the use of the document.

As you pointed out in your letter, the Department of Health and Human Services—including ATSDR—follows Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) procedures when releasing information

---

1 April 4, 2005: Policy to Manage and Access to Sensitive Drinking Water Related Information. USEPA, Office of Water.
requested by the public under FOIA. The release of this report, however, was not in response to a FOIA request, but part of ATSDR’s public health work at the site. We are continuing to work with the DON to address issues of disclosure of information that may impact installation security while preserving the integrity and transparency of our activities.

Please be assured that the issue of base security does not affect how ATSDR conducts its work, which is focused on determining human health risks from exposures to historic contaminated drinking water at Camp Lejeune. We will complete the scientific studies at Camp Lejeune without compromising scientific quality or timeliness and ensure that the public is fully informed of the results of our water modeling and health studies.

Thank you for your interest in our work at Camp Lejeune. For more specific information concerning DON’s installation security concerns, we refer you to the DON.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Thomas R. Frieden, M.D., M.P.H.
Director, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and
Administrator, ATSDR
Cc:
Thomas Frieden, Director and Administrator, CDC/ATSDR
Christopher Portier, Director, NCEH/ATSDR

CDC ID Doc. 2194004, Canterbury
Prepared by Dr. Thomas Sinks, Deputy Director, NCEH/ATSDR, 770-488-0604
Contact Person: Sascha Chaney, 770-488-0604
Spelling verifier used by: [leave blank]