American Jewish University

November 5, 2015

Dear Mr. Grover,

American Jewish University (AJU) acquired the Brandeis-Bardin Institute site in 2007 after conducting extensive due diligence on the environmental condition of the property, including a comprehensive evaluation of two decades worth of testing by state and federal authorities, and by BBI. Based on an exhaustive records review and the conclusion of scientific experts, we found no cause for concern about the health and safety of the campers, staff or other visitors – past or present. Current testing confirms the safety of the property.

***[[NBC4'S RESPONSE: AJU is overstating the amount of state and federal testing done on their property. The property for the Brandeis-Bardin Institute was purchased in 1947 and activities at the site have been in full swing since the early 1950s. Since that time, some 65 years, there have been only three efforts to test for contamination on Brandeis property that involved state and federal authorities. In the early 1990s, the U.S. EPA reviewed two studies (the studies were actually paid for and managed by the owner of the Santa Susana Field Lab (SSFL), Rocketdyne/Boeing. These tests found elevated levels of radioactive contamination, including strontium-90, cesium-137, plutonium-238 and tritium.***

***State authorities (The California Department of Toxic Substances Control) were brought in to confirm that perchlorate was found on the property after Ventura County found the chemical in a Brandeis well. Perchlorate is a chemical used in rocket fuel and has been found at the Santa Susana Field Lab. Further testing confirmed that perchlorate samples were found at the Brandeis well at levels that were five to 25 times higher than allowed under state water quality regulations.***

***A federally funded study by Dr. Yoram Cohen of UCLA found that contamination did migrate to The Brandeis-Bardin Institute, and he told NBC4 in an interview that during the rocket tests at the Santa Susana Field Lab, when the wind blew toward the Brandeis Property, "there is no question that people that were there were exposed." His study also confirmed the findings of radioactive and chemical contamination at Brandeis.***

***NBC4 asked AJU for copies of any other state or federal tests that they've evaluated to determine the safety of the property but they have not provided those. NBC4 also asked AJU for all of the private environmental tests done at the Brandeis-Bardin Institute property over its 65-plus year history, but AJU only provided us brief memoranda about eight tests from the years 1996, 2006, 2007, 2009, 2011, 2012, 2013 and 2014 and many were missing key elements including the lab reports.***

***For example, the 1996 report by Brandeis' environmental consultant tested only avocados and oranges and only tested for one type contaminant in each. One rainwater sample was also tested. As for the avocados and oranges, the tests didn't measure individual pieces of produce, which would have given a range of readings, but the avocados were combined and the***

***oranges were combined to give a composite or average reading for each kind of produce, which can hide a high result by averaging it with lower ones. The consultant also tested one rainwater sample. No tests on soil or groundwater appeared in this report. AJU has not provided NBC4 with any private tests that Brandeis conducted prior to 1996.]]***

Importantly, the BBI property has never had a validated reading of unsafe contamination levels in water, soil, milk or vegetation. In 1995, the EPA definitively concluded that there was no health risk to campers or camp counselors on the BBI property. In fact, the risk level to campers or counselors measured less than one in a million. Continued testing since AJU's acquisition of the site confirms the ongoing safety of the property. Soils, milk and agriculture on the BBI property are tested on a periodic basis, and groundwater is tested multiple times each year, supervised by the California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) and by AJU's independent analyst. These results have consistently shown the site to be safe.

***[[NBC4'S RESPONSE: In the eight testing memoranda that AJU provided NBC4, the May 5, 2006 testing report shows that in 2004 (the 2004 report was not provided to NBC4. Rather, we found the data in a chart in the 2006 report), perchlorate at more than twice the state regulatory limit for drinking water was found in the milk of a "BBI milk cow."***

***In 1991, Rockwell International, which owned the Santa Susana Field Lab at the time, found trichloroethylene (TCE) in a well on the Brandeis property at "more than three times the maximum contaminant level allowed by California EPA." TCE is a chemical compound used extensively at the Santa Susana Field Lab as industrial solvent. The National Academy of Sciences says TCE is a carcinogen and potential health hazard.***

***In 1993 and 1995, tests performed by the owner of the Santa Susana Field Lab and reviewed by the EPA found elevated levels of radioactive elements on the Brandeis property. At the time the EPA wrote that they "determined that the radionuclides do not pose a threat to human health or the environment." But today, the EPA has strengthened their standards in regards to what is a safe level of radiation and the National Academy of Sciences says there is no safe level of radiation and even small amounts can increase a person's risk of cancer. Dr. Robert Dodge, of the nonprofit, Physicians for Social Responsibility, tells NBC4 that children are particularly vulnerable to radiation and toxic chemicals because their bodies are still developing.***

***Dr. Ali Tabidian, a professor of Hydrogeology at California State University Northridge, reported in his study, "Land-use conversion and its potential impact on stream/aquifer hydraulics and perchlorate distribution in Simi Valley, California," identified "perchlorate with concentrations up to 150 µ g/L, in samples from a flowing well located about one mile north of the SSFL at the Brandeis Bardin Institute." Dr. Tabidian also writes that Brandies needs, "long-term short interval sampling" to better understand how the perchlorate contamination is impacting their property. The AJU has not provided NBC4 with long-term short interval perchlorate sampling reports.]]***

AJU has reviewed your questions as well as past reporting on the Santa Susana Field Laboratory (SSFL). Attached are several studies and reports that have been conducted on the BBI property.

These studies are consistent with voluminous government findings that consistently reach the same conclusion: that BBI is entirely safe.

***[[NBC4'S RESPONSE: In a 1997 report submitted as part of a lawsuit filed by the Brandeis-Bardin Institute against the owner of the Santa Susana Field Lab, Brandeis' own environmental scientist, Joel Cehn, wrote, "The Brandeis-Bardin Institute property is contaminated, at both the surface and subsurface, with radiological and chemical contaminants." Further, he writes, "contaminated ground water is moving toward the center of the Brandeis property (from south to north) and that "Soil on the Brandeis property is contaminated with tritium, strontium-90, cesium-137, PCB, dioxins, toluene and petroleum hydrocarbons. During rainwater runoff events, this soil is carried from the area of the southern property line, to central and northern areas of the Brandeis property."***

***AJU told NBC4 that for decades they've been regularly testing the property for contamination. We asked to see all of those tests but AJU only provided us brief memoranda about eight tests from the years 1996, 2006, 2007, 2009, 2011, 2012, 2013 and 2014 and many were missing key elements including the lab reports. For example, the 1996 tests only looked for two contaminants and only investigated avocados and oranges. As for the avocados and oranges, the tests didn't measure individual pieces of produce, which would have given a range of readings but were combined to give a composite or average, which can hide a high result by averaging it with lower ones. No tests on soil or water appeared in this report. AJU did not provide NBC4 with any of their own testing from prior to 1996 and none between 1997 and 2006.***

***AJU refers to "voluminous government findings" in this letter but has not provided them to NBC4. Dan Hirsch, director of the Program on Environmental and Nuclear Policy at U.C. Santa Cruz, who has been studying the contamination at Santa Susana and the neighboring communities for decades and is an advocate for a full cleanup of the site, tells NBC4, "There have been no "voluminous" government studies of Brandeis showing safety. The main voluminous government-funded study, by UCLA Professor Yoram Cohen and colleagues, in fact, found substantial evidence of potential harm from SSFL in areas within two miles of the site." Hirsch adds, "The extensive federally-funded health study by University of Michigan Professor Hal Morgenstern and his colleagues found significantly elevated cancer rates within two miles of SSFL."***

***Dr. Cohen, told NBC4 that there is no doubt that campers and staff who were at Brandeis while rocket testing was being performed at the Santa Susana Field Lab would have been exposed to toxic emissions if the wind was blowing in their direction. Dr. Cohen also tells us that while the risk to campers and staff today is reduced now that the Field Lab is decommissioned, as long as the site remains contaminated, groundwater contamination and possibly contaminated soil can continue to migrate offsite to neighboring communities.]]***

We have also reviewed your two prior reports for KNBC, as well as information contained on the station's website. Based on this review and reactions from the community, we know that KNBC has already misled viewers by raising false and unnecessary concerns about BBI by presenting incomplete and misleading information about environmental conditions on the property.

***[[NBC4'S RESPONSE: Prior to our first two reports, NBC4 asked AJU for an interview about the contamination at the Brandeis-Bardin Institute. They declined. NBC4 asked for copies of all of their testing throughout the years. In an email response, AJU wrote, "However, as much as we would like to be helpful, we are not in a position to devote the required staff time to respond to your more detailed inquiries nor do we see the necessity for doing so."]]***

For example, you mention "radiation has been found" at our "beloved summer sleepaway camp that has hosted some 30,000 children." Your website says the EPA "found 'radioactive elements' in a limited number of soil samples from the Brandeis property." What your reporting failed to mention is that historic testing results from mid-1990's [sic] speak of low readings of contamination – well within safe levels – on an area of the Brandeis Bardin property that was sold to Rocketdyne in 1997; this concentrated contamination has not migrated onto the current Brandeis Bardin property. Moreover, the test results pertaining to the current property demonstrate de minimis levels of radiation that pose no threat to human health. To choose a representative example, one test result in 2011 found a level of tritium on the current Brandeis Bardin property that measured just .08% of the EPA's safety limit. Put another way, the EPA would deem the site to be safe even if the reading were 1,000 times greater than what was found.

***[[NBC4'S RESPONSE: Dan Hirsch, director of the Program on Environmental and Nuclear Policy at U.C. Santa Cruz, tells NBC4, "other contamination findings on the former property weren't 'low levels of contamination;' they were well above the EPA preliminary remediation goals for unrestricted use." He adds, "They weren't 'well within safe levels' as there are no safe levels of radiation and they were above EPA PRGs. And some findings, such as the perchlorate in a well on the current Brandeis property and in milk from a Brandeis cow, exceeded drinking water standards."***

***The National Academy of Sciences has also stated that there is no safe level of radiation and Dr. Robert Dodge, a national board member of Physicians for Social Responsibility, told NBC4 that children are particularly sensitive to even low levels of radiation because they are still developing.***

***The Brandeis-Bardin Institute has been hosting children, teens and adults since at least the early 1950s. According to former campers and staff members, the contaminated land that was sold to Rocketydne in 1997 was used for decades for hiking and activities. We asked AJU to discuss the health impact of campers and staff that used that land but they declined.***

***AJU says the contamination has, "not migrated onto the current Brandeis Bardin property," but a report written by their own consultant, Joel Cehn, and submitted as part of their lawsuit against Rocketdyne/Boeing, says that, "contaminated ground water is moving toward the center of the Brandeis property (from south to north) and "During rainwater runoff events, this soil is carried from the area of the southern property line, to central and northern areas of the Brandeis property."***

***The same consultant wrote in a 2006 memo to Brandeis outlining his latest testing that the land purchased by Boeing "contains nearly all of the contaminated property." In other words,***

***even after Brandeis redrew its property lines, according to Cehn, some contamination remained on Brandeis property.***

***Dr. Yoram Cohen, of UCLA, and Dr. Ali Tabidian, of California State University Northridge, have both published studies that found that as long as the Santa Susana Field Lab remains contaminated, there is a risk of toxins migrating from the Field Lab to neighboring areas, including Brandeis.***

We are concerned that your upcoming report on Brandeis Bardin will similarly lack proper context or explanation, giving it the potential to create unwarranted fears among parents, staff and alumni.

***[[NBC4'S RESPONSE: Prior to airing the first two parts of our LA's Nuclear Secret series, we asked AJU for an interview to discuss the Brandeis-Bardin Institute. They declined. After our first two stories aired, we asked AJU for another interview. They declined. We asked again for all soil and water tests ever done on the current and past Brandies property. They provided us with memoranda from eight tests from 1996, 2006, 2007, 2009, 2011, 2012, 2013 and 2014. These were not comprehensive tests and were limited in where and what was tested and did not provide the actual lab reports. NBC4 pursued this story because parents and former staff members asked us to investigate the history of contamination at Brandeis. Those we spoke to, on and off camera said Brandeis and the AJU would not answer their questions about contamination, nor would they provide all of the testing reports.]]***

Unfortunately, in discussing the 1995 EPA report, KNBC did not share its conclusion, which states: "The water contained within this soil is not drinking water, but even if it were, the contamination would not exceed EPA's standard for tritium." In regard to Brandeis-Bardin, more than 20 years ago the EPA concluded: "Based on EPA's calculations, the theoretical cancer probability or risk to campers and camp counselors is less than EPA's threshold level for action of one in 1,000,000."

***[[NBC4'S RESPONSE: Dan Hirsch, director of the Program on Environmental and Nuclear Policy at U.C. Santa Cruz, who has reviewed the 1995 data, tells NBC4 that while the tritium levels in the soil were below drinking water standards, "AJU did not mention that TCE (trichloroethylene) found in wells was above Safe Drinking Water Act levels. Furthermore, strontium-90 found in the soil was above EPA's current preliminary remediation goal for release for unrestricted use."]]***

This selective inclusion of information and omission of critical context is commonplace in KNBC's reporting on this topic. Your website also reports: "In December 1995, Brandeis-Bardin sued the owner of the field lab at the time (Rocketdyne), alleging that 'hazardous materials' from Santa Susana—including radioactive elements--have 'seeped into the…the soil and groundwater' of Brandeis, and 'will cause great and irreparable injury' its land." [sic]

Unfortunately, KNBC fails to acknowledge that BBI's lawsuit did not allege any personal injury as a result of environmental conditions on the property. KNBC implies that the claim refers to the entire Brandeis Bardin property rather than a very small slice of the site that abutted the Rocketdyne property. The land in question was limited to a remote portion totaling approximately 100 acres of

the then 3,000-acre property, was not used by campers or staff, was likely inaccessible due to terrain conditions, and was ultimately sold to Rocketdyne.

***[[NBC4'S RESPONSE: According to the confidential Brandeis / Boeing legal settlement, which NBC4 has obtained, the contaminated area that was sold to Boeing in 1997 was just over 181 acres. Former campers and staffers told us that in the decades prior to the legal settlement; they had access to every part of the site and remember hiking up to the Santa Susana Field Lab.***

***AJU is correct that the BBI lawsuit did not allege any personal injury. The lawsuit, however, claimed that "Defendants' release of hazardous substances into soil and groundwater, contaminating the facility [[Brandeis]] and the real property, interferes with plaintiff's use and comfortable enjoyment of its property. Defendant's release of hazardous substances into soil, air and groundwater, contaminating the real property, is injurious to the environment, especially since it has become commingled in the groundwater."***

***In the lawsuit settlement, the value of the land is determined to be $199,870. Boeing paid Brandeis an additional $3 million under the settlement.]]***

Brandeis-Bardin Institute is a well-known home for some of the most inspiring and important artistic, cultural, intellectual and environmental pursuits undertaken by the Jewish people both locally and nationally. We do this in an environment that is safe and supportive for all who visit. We request that you provide a full and accurate story of the BBI property. That story would need to conclude, based on scientific facts, that the property is safe.

***[[NBC4'S RESPONSE: There is no question that the people interviewed for this story love the institution and value its contribution to the "artistic, cultural, intellectual and environmental pursuits undertaken by the Jewish people both locally and nationally." They told NBC4 that they are speaking out, not out of anger toward the Institute, but because they are concerned about the safety and transparency of the organization. In regard to AJU's assertion that "the property is safe," Dan Hirsch, director of the Program on Environmental and Nuclear Policy at U.C. Santa Cruz, who has reviewed the limited test results provided by AJU as well as the other data that exists regarding Brandeis contamination, tells NBC4 that, "the minimal data to which AJU points are insufficient to adequately support their claim 'that the property is safe.' It ignores the data of contamination migrating in Brandeis. Furthermore, it ignores the troubling finding of perchlorate in a Brandeis well and in milk from a Brandeis cow."***

***Dr. Robert Dodge who has studied the effects of contamination from the Santa Susana Field Lab, for the nonprofit group "Physicians for Social Responsibility," tells NBC4 that he doesn't believe that the Brandeis land is safe.]]***

**Response to KNBC Questions**

The following responses address the questions you sent to AJU on October 28, 2015:

- *If there has ever been at any point from 1947 to present, any health risk or potential danger to anyone on Brandeis property, from contaminants that migrated from Santa Susana, and from emissions from rocket tests.*

We have studied the site extensively, as have federal and state authorities. Based on an exhaustive records review and the conclusion of scientific experts, we found no cause for concern about the health and safety of the campers, staff or other visitors – past or present. Current testing confirms the safety of the property.

***[[NBC4'S RESPONSE: Dr. Yoram Cohen, lead author of the UCLA study, "The Potential for Offsite Exposures Associated with Santa Susana Field Laboratory," told NBC4 that there is no doubt that campers and staff who were at Brandeis while rocket testing was being performed at the Santa Susana Field Lab would have been exposed to toxic emissions if the wind was blowing in their direction. His study of offsite contamination found evidence that toxic contaminants had migrated onto Brandeis property.***

***Dr. Hal Morgenstern of the University of Michigan and author of the federally funded study, "Cancer Incidence in the Community Surrounding the Rocketdyne Facility in Southern California," found a more than 60 percent increase in the rates of certain cancers for people living within two miles of the site, a distance that includes some of the Brandeis property.***

***Dr. Ali Tabidian, a professor of Hydrogeology at California State University Northridge, reported in his study, "Land-use conversion and its potential impact on stream/aquifer hydraulics and perchlorate distribution in Simi Valley, California," identified "perchlorate with concentrations up to 150 µ g/L, in samples from a flowing well located about one mile north of the SSFL at the Brandeis Bardin Institute."***

***In addition, AJU is overstating the amount of state and federal testing down on their property. The property for the Brandeis-Bardin Institute was purchased in 1947 and activities at the site have been in full swing since the early 1950s. Since that time, some 65 years, there have been only three efforts to test for contamination on Brandeis property that involved state and federal authorities. In the early 1990s, the U.S. EPA reviewed two studies (the studies were actually paid for and managed by the owner of the Santa Susana Field Lab (SSFL), Rocketdyne/Boeing). These tests found elevated levels of radioactive contamination including strontium-90, cesium-137, plutonium-238 and tritium.***

***State authorities (The California Department of Toxic Substances Control) were brought in to confirm that perchlorate was found on the property after Ventura County found the chemical in a Brandeis well. Perchlorate is a chemical used in rocket fuel and has been found at the Santa Susana Field Lab. Further testing confirmed that perchlorate samples were found at the Brandeis well at levels that were 5 to 25 times higher than allowed under state water quality regulations.***

***NBC4 asked AJU for copies of any other state or federal tests that they've evaluated, but they have not provided those. NBC4 also asked the AJU for all of the private environmental tests done on the Brandeis-Bardin Institute property over its 65-plus year history, but AJU only provided us with selected tests from the years 1996, 2006, 2007, 2009, 2011, 2012, 2013 and 2014 that were limited in where and what was***

***tested. Past employees of the Institute told NBC4 that they did have concerns about the safety of the site and were not given access to the complete testing records or provided with answers to their questions.]]***

- *Specifically, were people at Camp Alonim and BCI at risk in the summer of 1959 during the partial nuclear meltdown at Santa Susana?*

  There is no scientific data or other evidence to suggest any cause for concern on behalf of current or former campers, staff or visitors. In fact, many alumni continue to return to BBI on a regular basis.

  ***[[NBC4'S RESPONSE: When AJU conducted due diligence during its merger with the Brandies-Bardin Institute, they commissioned a report from an environmental consulting firm called ChemRisk. In the report, the consultant writes, "Because the accident with the Sodium Reactor Experiment did occur in 1959, there is much uncertainty in how much radioactivity was released, and engineers and scientists with extensive credentials have stated and testified that releases could have been large, there will remain the possibility that claims will be made by BBI facility visitors or workers that health effects have been caused by exposures to materials released from that incident." Further in the report, they write, "Therefore, the acquirer may wish to purchase some insurance to protect themselves or put in reserve (for perhaps 30 years) enough monies to deal with the costs of defending even a nuisance lawsuit."***

  ***In NBC4's investigation, "LA's Nuclear Secret," former Santa Susana Field Lab workers have told us how barrels of radioactive waste were illegally burned right above Brandeis, and the workers told us that for years, starting with the partial nuclear meltdown of the Lab's SRE reactor, radioactive gases were secretly released from reactors into the community and sometimes right toward the children and staff at the camp.]]***

- *Any clean up or remediation work that has taken place on Brandeis land to remove contamination that has been discovered?*

  Rocketdyne found mercury in soil in a remote area of our former property, near the boundary between the SSFL and BBI, on land sold to Rocketdyne (now Boeing). The EPA, in its 1995 fact sheet, writes: "…Rocketdyne has removed the contaminated soil by excavating it from both areas and shipping it off-site for proper disposal. Rocketdyne confirmed that it had removed all of the contaminated soil by resampling the areas after excavation."

  Additionally, in 2009 Boeing removed clay target pieces from a remote section of the Brandeis Bardin property that adjoins the property sold to Boeing. These clay targets washed onto the property from an old Rocketdyne employees' shooting range. Boeing met the cleanup requirements, and follow-up tests show the location to be safe.

  Finally, it is important to note that the Brandeis-Bardin property totals 2,800 acres, and the remote areas that were excavated are far from locations used by campers and staff.

***[[NBC4'S RESPONSE: AJU appears to be referring to the contamination found in the Northern Drainage section of the area. According to a DTSC 2007 fact sheet, "The headwaters of the Northern Drainage is in the southeastern portion of the Mountains Recreation Conservancy Authority's Sage Ranch Park (Sage Ranch) and continues west onto the SSFL facility and then in a northerly direction off-site onto the Brandeis-Bardin Institute property. In the fact sheet, the DTSC writes, "The presence of asbestos is a potential risk to human health, as it can cause lung disease. The elevated concentrations of PAHs pose a potential risk to human health and the environment. Long-term exposure to low levels of some PAHs, such as benzo(a)pyrene, has the potential to cause cancer." According to the DTSC, not only did they find the clay pigeons with polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), but they also found lead and rocket igniters containing perchlorate.]]***

- *Whether groundwater/well water has ever been used for any purpose at Brandeis?*

  Since 1964, 100 percent of the site's drinking water has come from the Calleguas Municipal Water District, which provides water to roughly three-quarters of Ventura County residents. AJU has no reason to believe that drinking water used prior to that time came from well water on the property. And to reiterate, extensive tests have shown ground water on the site to be perfectly safe for consumption.

  ***[[NBC4'S RESPONSE: In the "Pre-trial Conference Order" submitted during The Brandeis-Bardin Institute lawsuit, both parties stipulated that "The Institute has not used groundwater for human consumption since at least the early 1970s." This would indicate that groundwater was used for human consumption for decades. In addition, in the book, "The Brandeis-Bardin Institute: A Living History," the author writes, "During the first three days of the 1948 aliyah, one BCIer recalled, 'there were no showers and limited toilet flushing. The well finally came in and they were able to fill the new BCI pool which was just completed, as well as have water for all our needs.'"***

  ***In the 2011 memorandum written by Brandeis's environmental consultant and provided to NBC4 for AJU, the consultant writes that he "tested natural springs on the property, which are sometimes used for watering livestock." And a June 23, 2003 letter to Brandeis from the Los Angeles Regional Water Board states that the bathtub well on the Brandeis property, which tested positive for perchlorate, was being used by livestock.***

  ***According to a 2006 Brandeis testing memo, milk from a Brandeis cow tested positive for perchlorate at more than twice the state regulatory limit for drinking water.]]***

- *Why certain parts of Brandeis land have signs posted saying "No Hiking Beyond This Point," and "Do not Drink or use this water."*

  On a few well sites on our property, signs were posted advising visitors not to drink ground water they may encounter. While testing has shown this water to be free from contamination, it comes from an unfiltered source and may not suitable for drinking.

Additionally, signs on the BBI site clearly indicate the borders to the property, along with "No hiking" signs at the southwest corner of the property to keep campers and staff from passing beyond our borders.

***[[NBC4'S RESPONSE: NBC4 has asked AJU to provide all of the testing records for Brandeis to confirm that the water is free from contamination and AJU has declined to provide them.]]***

- *How AJU came to the conclusion that Brandeis land is completely "safe."*

AJU acquired the BBI site in 2007 after conducting extensive due diligence on the environmental condition of the property, including a comprehensive evaluation of two decades worth of testing by state and federal authorities, and by BBI. Based on an exhaustive records review and the conclusion of scientific experts, we found no cause for concern about the health and safety of the campers, staff or other visitors – past or present. Current testing confirms the safety of the property. Importantly, the BBI property has never had a validated reading of unsafe contamination levels in water, soil, milk or vegetation. In 1995, the EPA definitively concluded that there was no health risk to campers or camp counselors on the BBI property. In fact, the risk level to campers or counselors measured less than one in a million. Continued testing since AJU's acquisition of the site confirms the ongoing safety of the property. Soils, milk and agriculture on the BBI property are tested on a periodic basis, and groundwater is tested multiple times each year, all supervised by the California Department of Toxic Substances Control. These results have consistently shown the site to be safe.

***[[NBC4'S RESPONSE: We contacted the United States EPA who told us in an email that, "EPA is unable to locate any documentation regarding a 1995 certification of Brandeis." In 1991, Rockwell International, which owned the Santa Susana Field Lab at the time, found trichloroethylene (TCE) in a well on the Brandeis property at "more than three times the maximum contaminant level allowed by California EPA." In 1993 and 1995, tests performed by the owner of the Santa Susana Field Lab and supervised by the EPA found elevated levels of radioactive elements on the Brandeis property. At the time the EPA wrote that they, "determined that the radionuclides do not pose a threat to human health or the environment" but today, the EPA has strengthened standards on what are considered safe levels of radiation and the National Academy of Sciences says there is no safe level of radiation and even small amounts can increase a person's risk of cancer.***

***Dr. Yoram Cohen, lead author of the UCLA study, "The Potential for Offsite Exposures Associated with Santa Susana Field Laboratory," told NBC4 that there is no doubt that campers and staff who were at Brandeis while rocket testing was being performed at the Santa Susana Field Lab would have been exposed to toxic emissions if the wind was blowing in their direction. His study of off-site contamination found evidence that toxic contaminants had migrated onto Brandeis property.***

***Dr. Hal Morgenstern, of the University of Michigan and author of the federally funded study, "Cancer Incidence in the Community Surrounding the Rocketdyne Facility in***

***Southern California," found a more than 60 percent increase in the rates of certain cancers for people living within two miles of the site, a distance that includes some of the Brandeis property. Dr. Ali Tabidian, a professor of Hydrogeology at California State University Northridge, reported in his study, "Land-use conversion and its potential impact on stream/aquifer hydraulics and perchlorate distribution in Simi Valley, California," identified "perchlorate with concentrations up to 150 µ g/L, in samples from a flowing well located about one mile north of the SSFL at the Brandeis Bardin Institute."***

***In their own letter, AJU acknowledges that in 2009, they had to remove clay pigeons from their own property because of contaminants. The Los Angeles Regional Water Board also found that various contaminants have left the Santa Susana Field Lab and drained onto the Brandeis property.]]***

- *Finally, we also want to request, once again, that AJU share with us records of all tests ever done, by any party, on soil, water, or vegetation on Brandeis land to determine whether there is chemical or radionuclide contamination. Rabbi Strear previously told us testing has been done "routinely" for over 20 years.*

  KNBC has access to thousands of pages of test results and other documents about the BBI property, including repeated government studies that have analyzed the site. The EPA has concluded that there is less than a one-in-a-million risk to campers or camp counselors. AJU's own testing has concluded the site is completely safe.

  ***[[NBC4'S RESPONSE: For months, NBC4 asked for all of the Brandeis environmental testing data and AJU declined. Several days before our story aired, AJU provided brief memoranda for eight tests and many were missing key elements including the lab reports. AJU says we have "access to thousands of pages of test results and other documents" but only provided NBC4 with 45 pages of material.]]***

  Let's start with groundwater testing. Very low, safe levels of tritium have been detected at the southwest corner of the property on land acquired by BBI in 1972 (the former Arness Ranch). A reading in 2011 found a level that was just .08% of the EPA's safety limit. Put another way, the EPA would deem the site to be safe even if the reading were 1,000 times greater than what was found. Separately, in the spring of 2003 a single well tested positive for perchlorate, but an extensive investigation by Boeing has determined that those results were false positives. More than 100 follow-up tests revealed zero evidence of perchlorate on BBI property. Along with ground water testing, soil is monitored periodically for a variety of potential pollutants. This testing has consistently shown that soil on the property is safe. Fruits and vegetables grown at BBI represent less than 1 percent of the overall food supply on the site and are entirely safe. These foods are routinely tested for safety, and the results demonstrate that they are as safe as fruits and vegetables sold in local supermarkets.

  ***[[NBC4'S RESPONSE: Dan Hirsch, director of the Program on Environmental and Nuclear Policy at U.C. Santa Cruz tells NBC4, "other contamination findings on the former property weren't 'low levels of contamination;' they were well above the EPA***

***preliminary remediation goals for unrestricted use." He adds, "They weren't 'well within safe levels' as there are no safe levels of radiation and they were above EPA PRGs. And some findings, such as the perchlorate in a well on the current Brandeis property and in milk from a Brandeis cow, exceeded drinking water standards."***

***While Boeing and AJU claim that the perchlorate finds were false positive, the California Department of Toxic Substance Control (September 23, 2003 Memorandum from Fred Seto, Ph.D.) confirmed that levels of perchlorate above the state's regulatory limit for drinking water was found in a well on the Brandeis property.***

***The May 5, 2006 testing memo provided to NBC4 by AJU showed that in 2004 (the 2004 report was not provided to NBC4. Rather, we found the data in a chart in the 2006 report), perchlorate at more than twice the state regulatory limit for drinking water was found in the milk of a "BBI milk cow."]]***

Our site is safe, and hundreds of studies prove it. We request that KNBC provide AJU with any credible, scientific information that would indicate any other conclusion.

***[[NBC4'S RESPONSE: In over a year of reporting on the subject of the Santa Susana Field Lab and the impact on the facility on the community, including interviews with public officials, scientists and experts on Santa Susana, none of these sources could identify more than a handful of studies that looked at the contamination at Brandeis. All of these studies found evidence of contamination on the site. AJU says there are "hundreds of studies to prove" the site is safe, but they have not provided NBC4 with any of them. We have also repeatedly asked AJU for all of their private tests, but they've only provided eight, despite telling NBC4 that they've conducted years of regular testing.***

***A 1991 Rockwell International internal letter, which Brandeis cites in their lawsuit against the company, says trichloroethylene (TCE) was found in a Brandeis well at a level "more than three times the maximum contaminant level allowed by California EPA." And in the eight testing reports that AJU provided NBC4, the May 5, 2006 testing report shows that in 2004 (the 2004 report was not provided to NBC4. Rather, we found the data in a chart in the 2006 report), perchlorate at more than twice the state regulatory limit for drinking water was found in the milk of a "BBI milk cow."]]***

**Statement to KNBC**

The following is an official statement from American Jewish University concerning the Brandeis-Bardin Institute (BBI) and Camp Alonim property in Simi Valley:

There is absolutely no question that the Brandeis-Bardin Institute (BBI) property is safe, and has been for decades, if not longer.

American Jewish University (AJU) acquired the BBI site in 2007 after conducting extensive diligence on the environmental condition of the property, including a

comprehensive evaluation of two decades worth of testing by state and federal authorities, and by BBI.

Based on an exhaustive records review and the conclusion of scientific experts, we found no cause for concern about the health and safety of the campers, staff or other visitors – past or present. Current testing confirms the safety of the property.

Importantly, the BBI property has never had a validated reading of unsafe contamination levels in water, soil, milk or vegetation. In 1995, the Environmental Protection Agency definitively concluded that there was no health risk to campers or camp counselors on the BBI property. In fact, the risk level to campers or counselors measured less than one in a million.

Continued testing since AJU's acquisition of the site confirms the ongoing safety of the property. Soils, milk and agriculture on the BBI property are tested on a periodic basis, and groundwater is tested multiple times each year, all supervised by the California Department of Toxic Substances Control. These results have consistently shown the site to be safe.

Since 1964, 100 percent of the site's drinking water has come from the Calleguas Municipal Water District, which provides water to roughly three-quarters of Ventura County residents. Further, AJU has no evidence that drinking water used prior to that time came from well water on the property. In any case, the BBI property has never had a validated reading of unsafe contamination levels in water.

AJU remains committed to the health and well-being of all campers, staff and visitors at BBI. We are proud of the long-standing track record of safety and the ongoing commitment to testing to ensure a safe and healthy environment for everyone who visits.

**Research Findings**

Much of the research on the BBI site is from governmental sources, including the EPA and the California DTSC. Attached are several reports commissioned by AJU:

- 1996 Crop Testing
- 2006 Testing
- 2007 Summer Testing Results
- 2009 Winter Testing Results
- 2011 Summer Testing
- 2012 New Wells Installation and Testing
- 2013 Testing of New Wells at BBC
- 2014 Summer Testing

Also attached is an EPA Update (July 1995), DTSC Fact Sheet from 2003, and an excerpt from Boeing's Site Environment Report for Calendar Year 2005. Section 4.2.1 of this report concluded:

"Extensive Radiological Monitoring Since 1956 Has Demonstrated that SSFL Operations Have Not Resulted in a Health Risk to Neighboring Communities."

These reports all reach a clear, fact-based conclusion: BBI is safe.

Sincerely,
Joanna Gerber, EdD
Vice President, Communications and Marketing
American Jewish University

*Attachments*

***[[NBC4'S RESPONSE: NBC4 has made the attachments available on our "LA's Nuclear Secret" website under The Brandeis-Bardin Institute section.]]***