

CSWAB

Citizens for Safe Water Around Badger
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Dvija Michael Bertish
Columbia Riverkeeper
Rosemere Neighborhood Association

February 9, 2009

Dear Dvija:

We are writing to support the efforts of affected community members to achieve a higher level of public oversight and to assure optimal protection of public health and safety in response to military toxins at the Camp Bonneville site.

Citizens for Safe Water Around Badger (CSWAB) was organized in 1990 when rural families near Wisconsin's 7,400-acre Badger Army Ammunition Plant learned private drinking water wells were polluted with high levels of cancer-causing chemicals. Although the Army knew the extent of soil and groundwater contamination, this information never reached the community and as a result three families living near the plant drank poisoned water for over 15 years. The founders believed community involvement could have prevented this tragedy and consequently organized CSWAB both to empower and to protect nearby residents and plant workers from further harm.

Our community has suffered irreparable harm because the Department of Defense, environmental regulators, and health officials excluded community members from the decision-making process. In order to ensure a healthy sustainable future for our children and the earth, it is imperative that community and tribal members have a voice and are empowered in decisions that affect their environment and their health. This letter appeals for environmental justice for nearby residents and workers at Camp Bonneville and other contaminated military bases nationwide who are disproportionately burdened by the inherent environmental health risks associated with such sites. It is their future that lies in the balance.

Sincerely,



Laura Olah
Executive Director