



# **Burn Pit Exposure – DBA Seminar Advanced Consulting January 16, 2013**

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# Burn Pit Exposure – DBA Seminar

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- ❑ November 25, 2012
- ❑ Settlement: Iraq Veterans Awarded \$85M in Personal Injury Lawsuit Against KBR, Halliburton
- ❑ November 16 2012 Portland, OR: 12 soldiers who became ill after serving in the Iraq war have been awarded an \$85 million settlement in their personal injury lawsuit against American military contractor Kellogg Brown and Root (KBR). In their lawsuit, the first concerning soldiers' exposure to a toxin at a water plant in southern Iraq, the servicemen allege that KBR was negligent. Specifically, they claim that as a result of exposure to sodium dichromate, they now suffer from respiratory diseases.

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- ❑ In their personal injury lawsuit against American military contractor Kellogg Brown and Root (KBR). In their lawsuit, the first concerning soldiers exposure to a toxin at a water plant in southern Iraq, the servicemen allege that KBR was negligent.
- ❑ Specifically, they claim that as a result of exposure to sodium dichromate, they now suffer from respiratory diseases.
- ❑ Furthermore, they are deeply concerned that a carcinogen the toxin contains, hexavalent chromium, could cause cancer later in life
- ❑ Each of the dozen Army National Guardsman involved in the lawsuit was awarded \$850,000 in non-economic damages and another \$6.25 million in punitive damages for “reckless and outrageous indifference” to their health.

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### ❑ Burn Pits

- ❑ Open-air burn pits have operated widely at military sites in Iraq and Afghanistan. In response to the exposure concerns of many returning Veterans, VA is sponsoring several [studies on possible health effects](#).
- ❑ The most recent Institute of Medicine report on burn pits, “[Long-Term Health Consequences of Exposure to Burn Pits in Iraq and Afghanistan](#)” was released on October 31, 2011.
- ❑ **Exposure to smoke from burn pits**
- ❑ Health effects depend on a number of factors, such as the kind of waste being burned, individual susceptibility, exposure duration, air flow patterns, and closeness to the pit. You may be at greater risk if you burned waste at the pit compared to those were only in the vicinity of the smoke.

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- ❑ During deployment to a war zone, military personnel are exposed to a variety of environmental hazards, many of which have been linked to long-term adverse health outcomes, such as cancer and respiratory disease.
- ❑ Many veterans returning from the conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan have health problems they believe are related to their exposure to the smoke from the burning of waste in open-air “burn pits” on military bases.
- ❑ Open-air waste burning has long been used by the military when other disposal options have not been available. Particular controversy surrounds the burn pit used to dispose of solid waste at Joint Base Balad (JBB) in Iraq, which burned up to 200 tons of waste per day in 2007.

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- ❑ Exposure to toxins may affect the skin, eyes, respiration, kidneys, liver, nervous system, cardiovascular system, reproductive system, peripheral nervous system, and gastrointestinal tract.
- ❑ Most of the irritation related to solid waste burning exposure, however, is temporary and resolves once the exposure is gone. This includes eye irritation and burning, coughing and throat irritation, breathing difficulties, and skin itching and rashes.
- ❑ **Type of waste burned**
- ❑ Waste products in burn pits include, but are not limited to: chemicals, paint, medical and human waste, metal/aluminum cans, munitions and other unexploded ordnance, petroleum and lubricant products, plastics and Styrofoam, rubber, wood, and discarded food.