CRITICAL FACTS ABOUT THE BRANDEIS-BARDIN PROPERTY

American Jewish University (AJU) has owned the Brandeis-Bardin Campus in Simi Valley since 2007. We take very seriously our responsibility to protect the health, safety and security of every person who visits this remarkable property. Recent reports by KNBC-TV and articles in the Jewish Journal have raised concerns about the safety of the property, including suggestions that visitors may have faced potential exposure to contamination from the neighboring Santa Susana Field Laboratory (SSFL). Despite KNBC’s reliance on innuendo, selective information and misleading claims, the facts are clear: Brandeis-Bardin is safe.

HERE ARE THE FACTS:

1. Extensive environmental testing over the years has been conducted at Brandeis-Bardin, dating back to 1991 and continuing until now. These tests, completed by Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC), the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the California Department of Health, the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission and others encompass soil, surface water, groundwater, vegetation, and milk. All confirmed test readings demonstrate that the campus poses no risk to health or safety. In 1995, the EPA determined Brandeis-Bardin to be safe, declaring “...the theoretical cancer probability or risk to campers and camp counselors is less than the EPA’s threshold level for action of one in 1,000,000.”

2. The DTSC and EPA still stand by their conclusion that the site is safe. DTSC is the state agency responsible for protecting residents from hazardous waste exposure. For nearly a decade, DTSC has reviewed the Brandeis testing data on a quarterly basis and has consistently found Brandeis-Bardin to be safe. On November 5, 2015, the agency confirmed the safety of the Brandeis site at a public workshop. Furthermore, the DTSC stated in writing on October 15, 2015: “Based on available data, there is no evidence of contamination from SSFL that poses an off-site threat to human health or the environment.”

3. Since 1964, 100 percent of the drinking water at Brandeis-Bardin has come from the Calleguas Municipal Water District, which provides water to roughly three-quarters of Ventura County residents. Although, as noted above, the ground water on our campus has been tested and demonstrated as safe to drink, we do not use it for drinking water; we also obtain our milk from well-known wholesale sources and not from livestock on the property.

4. It is true that a very small, remote portion of land, more than a mile from the active campus area, was once found to have limited contamination. This property has not been part of Brandeis-Bardin for nearly 20 years. It was sold to the Rocketdyne Company in 1997, along with a large buffer area.
5. To further reassure the public, AJU is commissioning further tests with additional independent consultants. We are confident that the results will reconfirm the safety of Brandeis-Bardin.

American Jewish University, the owner of Brandeis-Bardin, is committed to transparency and has shared comprehensive information about the safety of the property. We will continue to do so. Visit www.aju.edu/KNBCresponse to learn more.

HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF BRANDEIS-BARDIN AND THE SANTA SUSANA FIELD LABORATORY

Background

- Decades ago at the Santa Susana Field Laboratory, production and testing activity caused contamination to cross onto land previously owned by Brandeis-Bardin. This affected a very small area of the property on a steep hillside not used by visitors and more than a mile from active areas of camp. This property has not been part of the Brandeis-Bardin campus for almost 20 years.

- A 1959 nuclear accident at SSFL released radiation into the air, prompting significant oversight by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). There has been no evidence that this accident had any harmful impact on the Brandeis-Bardin campus or on any campers, staff or other visitors.

- AJU acquired the Brandeis-Bardin property in 2007 after conducting due diligence on the environmental condition of the property. We were made fully aware of prior events at the SSFL, and we found no cause for concern about the health and safety of campers, staff or visitors. Subsequent testing and continued oversight by the DTSC and the EPA confirm this conclusion.

Government Oversight and Findings

- The EPA confirmed the safety of the site in 1995, declaring that the low levels of radiation found on a remote piece of property “...do not pose a threat to human health or the environment.” The EPA also found “…the theoretical cancer probability or risk to campers and camp counselors is less than the EPA’s threshold level for action of one in 1,000,000.” Again, the remote piece of property in question is no longer part of Brandeis-Bardin nor has it been for almost 20 years.

- As recently as November 5, 2015, the California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) – the state agency responsible for protecting residents from hazardous waste exposure – confirmed the safety of the Brandeis-Bardin property at a public community meeting. On October 15, 2015, the DTSC stated in writing: “Based on the available data, there is no evidence of contamination from SSFL that poses an offsite threat to human health or the environment.” The DTSC is very familiar with all camp-related activities that take place on the Brandeis-Bardin site. If the DTSC felt that the Brandeis-Bardin site were unsafe, the agency would either limit or prevent its use and prescribe specific steps for remediation.
Addressing KNBC Allegations

- KNBC presented findings from years ago of isolated perchlorate contamination in a water well. This water is not used for drinking, and tests the following year – 13 years ago – did not detect contamination. In 2007, Haley & Aldrich, a leading engineering firm, conducted water sampling at Brandeis-Bardin on behalf of Boeing. Perchlorate was not detected. A single sample of cow’s milk in which perchlorate was found at elevated levels was never used for human consumption, and that one elevated test result from 2004 was never found again, even after repeated testing. All milk served at Brandeis-Bardin is obtained from well-known wholesale sources and not from our livestock.

- **AJU provided the KNBC reporter with detailed test analyses and government reports concluding the Brandeis-Bardin is safe.** Further, we directed the reporter to the DTSC’s online documents library with far more information about our site, including 26 reports characterizing soil and water at Brandeis-Bardin. Testing reports by Boeing, the SSFL’s current owner, are also available online.

AJU’s Ongoing Commitment

- **Our interest is the safety and welfare of everyone who visits Brandeis-Bardin. Our approach is to share information and to be transparent in our communications.** We have posted our comprehensive response to KNBC as well as information on the testing that has been done on site.

- For many years we (and those who managed Brandeis-Bardin before us) have conducted frequent and extensive tests on the Brandeis-Bardin property. **All such test results have indicated that Brandeis-Bardin has been and continues to be absolutely safe.** Although the ground water on our campus has been found safe to drink, we continue to refrain from using it for that purpose. Since 1964, 100 percent of the drinking water at Brandeis-Bardin has come from the Calleguas Municipal Water District.

- We want to reinforce our commitment to transparency in this matter. AJU has posted test findings conducted since we acquired the property in 2007. We have also included information that dates back further, and we provided links to the government reports related to testing at Brandeis-Bardin, as well as our response to KNBC. **Our entire staff takes our stewardship responsibilities very seriously, and we will continue to make sure that Brandeis-Bardin continues to be safe for all.**

- **As we proceed with our regularly scheduled testing for 2015, we are hiring additional independent consultants and commissioning a comprehensive new round of tests.**