

March 7, 1940

Mr. Frank Greene
La Crosse Auto Supply Company
123-125 South Sixth Street
La Crosse
Wisconsin

Dear Mr. Green:

Your letter of February 14th addressed to the Ethyl Gasoline Corporation concerning your employee who specializes in valve grinding and motor work, has been referred to me and has been lying on my desk unanswered for some days because of my enforced absence from the laboratory. The problem which you raise in connection with this man is one which is worthy of consideration. It has seemed to us for some time that under certain peculiar conditions of continuous work of this kind, a man might be exposed to significant quantities of lead. We feel quite certain that such a condition would be most unusual. We have had occasion to examine a number of men in this type of work without finding any evidence of significant lead exposure, or measureable lead absorption on their part. Moreover we have never found a case of significant lead exposure among workmen of this type. However, despite the fact that this has never occurred, so far as our experience goes, I am unwilling to take the position that it could not occur. Accordingly I should be very much interested in seeing and examining your employee, if it could be arranged. This could be done by making a trip to La Crosse but both my associates and I are occupied with a number of other matters at present, and this could not be done at once. It could be done promptly, however, if your employee could come to Cincinnati. We are very much interested in problems of this sort, and we are quite willing to defray the expense which would be associated with your employee's trip to Cincinnati. In doing this, however, I would not want to develop the idea in his mind that we have any anxiety concerning him, or that we have reason to believe that he was ill on account of lead exposure. Rather my point of view is that over a period of years we have been spending a great deal of money investigating the potential public health problems concerned with this industry, and there is no reason why we should not spend additional money and effort, especially when the circumstance seems to have

some useful information. Therefore, if both you and your employee were to look at this as something of an experimental study, we should be quite willing to examine him, to defray the expense of his trip to Cincinnati, and to give him and you a definite opinion as to the nature of his illness and also the degree to which he has absorbed lead as a consequence of his work.

If the above suggestion does not seem to be a feasible one, or if you feel that such a course would prejudice your employee, we can arrange at some later date to have him examined in La Crosse. However I should appreciate a reply from you at an early date. If you think it wise to have him come to see us, you might suggest a date on which this would be convenient.

Very truly yours,

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Robert A. Kehoe, M.D.

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