

January 28, 1930

Mr. A. E. Mittnacht,
Ethyl Gasoline Corp.,
25 Broadway,
New York City.

Dear Mr. Mittnacht:

In replying to your letter of December 24 in which you sent to me the reports from various district representatives concerning the shipments of ETHYL fluid, I find that I am somewhat tardy. However, I have gone over the reports rather carefully and have given considerable thought to the points raised in them. Your comments cover the situation pretty satisfactorily. In Mr. Martin's territory I think we would be justified in requesting that car load lots be received at Florence and Glenrock. I see no reason for any other changes in this territory. I agree with you that Sam Wagner has handled matters in his territory with his customary effectiveness, but I believe that the recommendations which he made in his letter should be put into effect and that he should personally arrange for the shipments of ETHYL fluid in a manner which he knows will be entirely safe, and that the Companies be billed for the expense rather than allow these Companies to choose any means of shipment which happens to be convenient. The only thing that gives me any anxiety is the situation in Durham's territory, especially as regards Greybull and Laramie. If the loading of cars to Greybull and Laramie were properly supervised; if there were a full understanding on the part of the railroad people of the difficulties associated with l.c.l. shipments; and if they were instructed in such a way that they would immediately get in touch with any of the refinery representatives in the event of difficulty, it might be perfectly safe to continue these shipments in the manner they have been attended to. I think you can see, however, that one loose end of this sort can and may in time produce difficulties. The freight hauls in that part of the country are long, and other freight contaminated with ETHYL fluid and cars so contaminated might go for considerable distances and for long periods of time without any adequate measures for cleansing. Something should be done, therefore, to assure ourselves that proper precautions are being taken. I know that the likelihood of leaks has been considerably diminished by the care which is being given to the drums at the blending plant. However, it seems likely to me that despite this care there may be occasionally leaking drums, especially under the conditions of

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temperature fluctuation that prevail in that part of the country. I can see the disadvantages so far as costs are concerned, but it seems to me that we might be justified in seeing to it that a man be detailed to go along with these shipments and to see that they are properly handled and that any untoward event be taken care of in the proper manner. This would be a matter of some inconvenience, but it would certainly not be a matter of great expense.

In the Pennsylvania division I do not feel that any drastic changes are necessary. The trucking of these drums by employees of the various refineries keeps them in hands that are familiar at least with their handling. The thing that troubles me most in their case is that unless a considerable amount of care is taken, one of these drums might be permitted to roll off a truck into a city street where it might constitute a considerable danger and create a fair amount of excitement. I also remember the grade crossings which are to be encountered in cross-country shipments and although there would not seem to be any good reason for collision between a train and one of these trucks, such things have happened and they might very easily happen in a case of shipment of ETHYL fluid. All of this means simply that persons who are handling drums of ETHYL fluid must be continually reminded of the care which is necessary to maintain their own safety and the safety of other persons.

Please accept my thanks for the careful manner in which you and the district men have gone into this. It is very good to know that your men are on the lookout for difficulties of this sort. I have only one further thing to recommend as a more or less general remedy for this type of difficulty. This is that wherever it is possible for one of your customers to confine their mixing activities in one or two large places, eliminating small mixing plants, every encouragement should be given them to do so. We have found in the past, and I am sure we will find in the future, that the small mixing plants are for a variety of reasons troublesome. The experience of the Standard Oil of Indiana has shown us very definitely that in some instances at least small mixing plants can be completely eliminated and all of the business carried on at a large plant with a saving in time, trouble, personnel difficulties, and even money. In our dealings with customers, therefore, we should never lose an opportunity to encourage the localization of mixing activities in one

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or a very few points. I stress this point because it seems to me likely that in the next few months you will be making contracts with new customers. This point is likely to rise many times. We should see to it that the character of the mixing equipment is of such a sort and that it brings about an amount of expenditure which discourages indiscriminant setting up of new mixing installations.

I shall be in New York next week and will be glad to discuss with you any and all matters that have to do with future developments. I shall probably arrive on Monday and will probably be busy for a day or two with matters which concern the present investigation. I shall get in touch with you from the hotel, and I can arrange to see you any time at your convenience. With kindest regards.

Very truly yours,

RAK:EJ

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