

October 2, 1964

Mr. W. M. Carson
Vice President and General Manager
Marwais Steel Company
6466 Gayhart Street
Los Angeles, California (90022)

Dear Mr. Carson:

Your letter of September 21st has been referred to me by Dean Grulee of the Medical School, to which your letter was addressed. This Laboratory has been engaged for many years in the investigation of potentially harmful industrial materials and products, and we have access, through a departmental library and its bibliographic staff to most of the information provided by other investigators of this and earlier periods. I point this out only for the purpose of assuring you that the advice which I shall give you is based upon long experience in the area of your difficulties.

The general problem which you face is not new to industry, even in your area. I am not clear, from your brief reference to the operations in your plant just what their type and scope may be but what you need, I am sure, is not information concerning the potentially or actually injurious effects of the materials which you are handling upon the human body, but some expert advice with respect to all of these matters including the utilization of appropriate means for the control of noxious or unpleasant fumes for the protection of your employees. I gather that there are no such persons in your organization or you would not be writing to us in Cincinnati. On the other hand, there are knowledgeable persons in your own vicinity, and for the sake of both convenience and economy, you should, I think, consult them.

The manner of going about this, is that of seeking out and engaging a suitable consultant, having him inspect the plant and its operations, obtain full information from you about the materials, make a survey which will assess the significance of the exposure to paint solvents and pigments, and perhaps to other chemicals, as they occur in the atmosphere of the plant, and (if need be) examine representative employees to determine what, if anything, is disturbing them. These things should be done to such extent or in such manner as to meet your practical needs and those of your employees, without getting into anything more elaborate and costly than is needed.

I could refer you to the best sources of information if I knew more about your situation. On the broad base of the practice of industrial hygiene, however, one of the best reference works (which you can consult, I am sure, in one of the libraries of a local medical school) is the recent (revised) edition of a text which is to appear in three volumes, two of which are now available. I cite it below in full for your benefit.

There are at least three men to whom I can refer you in Los Angeles.

r. W. M. Carson - (2) - October 2, 1964

It seems probable that my friend, Rutherford T. Johnstone, M.D., Brockman Building, Los Angeles, who is a private practitioner of industrial medicine, could advise you properly as to the seriousness of your problem, and put you in touch with some technical people who could advise and assist you to the extent of your need, in matters of industrial hygiene. Another man who could give you advice and guidance is Jean S. Felton, M.D., Professor of Occupational Health, University of California Medical Center, Los Angeles. Still another is an engineer, Fred R. Ingram, who is a private consultant in industrial hygiene (90 Panoramic Way, Walnut Creek, California (94598)).

We (our medical and technical people) could handle your problem for you in accordance with your wishes and needs, for we are accustomed and equipped for such purposes. Moreover, we are entirely willing to do so. However, considering the inconvenience and expense associated with the distance intervening between us, I think you can be well and less expensively served by professional people in your own area.

If you wish to write to me explaining your problem more fully, I may be able to give you some advice by correspondence. However, it seems very probable that you need advice that comes from direct observation, and I should be guilty of serving you badly if I were to neglect this aspect of the matter.

One other point comes to mind that you should consider. It would seem that you should have a physician in some professional relationship to your Company. If you do, I suggest that you take this up with him, and have him write to me. If you have a doctor as a consultant, other than your neighbor (who seems to have volunteered some advice), he should be consulted about this matter, and should give you such help as he can. It is always best in these matters to deal with a physician, if it is at all possible. Perhaps Dr. Beland would be willing to help you out in an intermediate capacity. If so I should be glad to hear from him. I can be really helpful only if I know something about your situation.

Very truly yours,

RAK:vr

Robert A. Kehoe, M.D.

Reference: "Industrial Hygiene and Toxicology," edited by Drs. Fassett and Irish (the first edition was edited by Frank Patty), published by Interscience Publishers, Incorporated, New York, New York.

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