

Lead Industries Association

420 LEXINGTON AVENUE

NEW YORK, N. Y.

CLINTON K. BANE, President
HAMILTON H. BRUSH, Vice President
RALPH W. WOODBERRY, Secretary
FELIX F. LARSEN, Treasurer

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TO THE MEMBERS OF THE LEAD INDUSTRIES ASSOCIATION:

Research on Protective Pipe Coatings

Last May the Lead Industries Association learned that the American Gas Association was cooperating with the Bureau of Standards in an investigation and actual field test of pipe coating materials used for protecting gas lines from corrosion. Inasmuch as red lead is an excellent protective material for ferrous metals, we were curious to know whether the proposed investigation was designed to include red lead among the coatings to be tested. We were especially interested in the subject as recent experimental work in California indicated that red lead, when baked upon pipe, makes an unusually effective priming coat. Baking seems to prevent any possibility of chemical or solvent interaction between the red lead and the secondary coal-tar or asphalt coating.

Upon inquiry we discovered that the test was to be competitive but intended to apply only to asphaltic and bituminous materials. We outlined this situation to the Directors and were authorized by them to see if, in the interests of red lead, the Lead Industries Association would be welcome as a participant in the proposed investigation. The National Lead Company kindly offered to place the facilities of its laboratory and staff at our disposal and assisted greatly in subsequent developments.

We thereupon visited Washington to persuade the Bureau of Standards and the Gas Association to enlarge the scope of its proposed test to include red lead and although we made our request at the eleventh hour both parties agreed to our suggestion.

Accordingly we have entered red lead in competition with numerous other protective pipe coating materials in the investigation mentioned above. During July and August untreated specimens of steel pipe were coated at Versailles, Pa., with coating compounds used by gas companies. In our case we decided to use two different types of coating, (a), a priming coat of red lead baked upon the pipe, followed by an application of an asphaltic coating and wrapper manufactured by the National Tube Company, (b), a red lead coating baked upon the pipe followed by a secondary coating of a bituminous material, - in this case a product of the Walles-Dove-Hermiston Company - bitumastic enamel. The application of the red lead coating was supervised by the National Lead Company. It was, of course, impractical for us to test every asphaltic and bituminous coat in conjunction with the use of red lead.