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Proposed Memorandum To Field of Sludge Disposal From Leaded Gasoline Storage Tanks

The Ethyl Corporation has made a detailed study of the handling of leaded sludge from gasoline storage tanks by a radically new method which stresses decomposition rather than special disposal. The procedure involves the exposure of sludge to air; a more practical term is "weathering."

In a two-year study just completed, it has been found that when sludge is spread on any surface such as ground, grass, concrete, etc., 98% of the organic lead will change to an inorganic form within four weeks.

Our Medical Department has approved a trial of this procedure. It is, therefore, in order now to make this information available to our customers. In view of the fact that this is a distinct change in policy i.e., spreading the sludge on top of the ground instead of burying it, this program must be checked very closely at first as each customer adopts this method. Specific instructions for checking the adequacy of the method will be issued separately.

The results of our studies indicate that there will be little or no danger of lead in the air immediately above the sludge disposal area, so that there should be no concern in

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this regard. It is recommended, however, that the disposal area be located away from office buildings close to roadways where the public may be involved. It is preferable to dispose of this sludge in an area adjacent to the tank which is being cleaned, not from the standpoint of lead vapors, but, if gasoline is floating on top of the sludge, it can represent a hazard during tank cleaning operations.

A memorandum that can be given to customers for their study and possible use is attached. It is proposed that this be taken around at an early date and if there are questions they can be duly noted and answers will be obtained.

It is suggested that you study this method before discussing it with customers and check with your Chief Product Service Engineer in the event that you do have any questions.

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