

1874 Feb - 7th Ark. Discovery - before Hancock -
before Hancock. He is not a good one. (1874)

August 13, 1940

Mr. Harry Kaley
Ethyl Gasoline Corporation
Chrysler Building
New York, New York

Dear Harry:

I am sending herewith a rough draft of a letter of information which seems adequate to us.

I have attempted to do two things; (1) to couch our main conclusion in the simplest language possible, and (2) not attempt to incorporate all the conclusions, but rather to encourage readers of the letter to consult our safety engineers when specific information is desired. Should you wish a more elaborate presentation, which we personally do not favor, the abstracts of Mr. Harrison and the letter of Mr. Shank that are enclosed, cover the work adequately.

I am returning the three abstracts on the assumption that they are your only copies and we should like to have them returned or have copies made should you wish to keep them.

Cordially,

WM:vr

Willard Machle, M. D.

KE 0022343

Letter of Information

Gentlemen:

For several years the Medical Department of the Ethyl Gasoline Corporation has been studying the hazards connected with the cleaning of tanks that have contained leaded gasoline. With the cooperation of the petroleum industry, we have succeeded in discovering how serious these hazards are, and where they are to be found. We are therefore reporting to you on the significant results of this study in an effort to aid you in establishing safe practices in tank cleaning, and with the object of securing your full cooperation in the prevention of accidents from this source.

At intervals in the past eight years, cases of lead poisoning have been caused by exposure in tanks that had contained leaded gasoline. We did not know how great the hazard was, or in what class of tanks dangerous exposure might exist. It was noted, however, that poisoning occurred only when tanks were cleaned without proper safeguards. Knowing this, the Ethyl Gasoline Corporation issued instructions to be followed in tank-cleaning and asked that these instructions be followed in certain situations. It is now apparent that these precautions must be taken in every case, whenever tanks that have contained leaded gasoline are entered for any purpose. Any tank that has contained leaded fuel may offer serious danger of exposure. This danger is due to organic lead compounds in the sludge. In general, the amounts of lead in scale and water bottom and the amounts of inorganic lead compounds introduced by treating operations are not large enough to cause any trouble. As might be expected, the amounts of organic lead in the sludge of tanks vary, but the mean or average value found for all tanks studied was sufficiently high to make the safeguarding of workmen imperative. It was not possible

to predict, from any information obtainable on a given tank, what the lead content of the sludge of that tank was likely to be. It is apparent, therefore, that no tank may be assumed to be free from a lead hazard. What is even more important, there is no relationship between the size of the tank and the amounts of organic lead which may be present in the sludge. Therefore the smaller tanks, such as jobber tanks, track-side storage and the like, are just as dangerous, if entered for cleaning, as are the larger tanks.

A number of other facts were learned from this study but none of them modify the above statements. All of the information obtained is in the hands of the safety engineers of the Ethyl Gasoline Corporation, and when any specific local problems arise, information may be obtained from them.

Willard Machle, M.D.

KE 0022345