

August 30, 1950

MEMORANDUM TO THE FILE

Re: Phillips Petroleum Company
Lep, Oklahoma

On Friday, August 25, we received a telephone communication from Mr. M. J. Fitzgerald of the Atlas Tank Company, Tulsa, that they had purchased two leaded tanks from Phillips Petroleum Company at Shidler, Oklahoma. These were tanks No. 2600 and 2601. Both 2500 barrels in capacity and both in aviation blending service until about 1945.

Mr. Fitzgerald wanted to know whether they were lead free. We checked our records and found that both had been cleaned in August, 1941, under the observation of Mr. L. E. Fleck but were not thoroughly cleaned from the standpoint of a lead hazard. At that time the tanks were entered merely to install suction lines and were put back in leaded service.

In view of the fact there were no tank cleaning reports in our files showing these tanks to be thoroughly cleaned, Mr. Fitzgerald was advised they were still hazardous. We asked him to notify us when these tanks were to be entered so we could have a representative present. On the morning of August 28 we received a call from Mr. G. K. Chappell, superintendent of Phillips at Lep, who stated the tanks had been cleaned Sunday morning by Mr. Fitzgerald and someone else. He stated they were in the tank 1½ hours and had left the sludge on the ground. He recommended the sludge be buried and this was done. After this work was done the crew returned to Tulsa and we talked to Mr. Fitzgerald on the morning of Tuesday, 8-29.

He told the writer he entered the tanks merely to inspect the bottom and found there was a small amount of sludge present (2 bushels in each tank), which he removed. He claimed the sludge consisted of "hard, dry scale" and there was no dust involved in removing same. He stated he felt no after effects from this work and did not sneeze while in the tank. He remarked he was supposed to notify us as to when this work was to be done but stated that in view of the very small amount of sludge he was sure it was safe to enter the tanks. He stated he alone went in both tanks and was in each tank about 1½ hours. He said he was not going to sue the Ethyl Corporation or Phillips and that the only one he could sue was the Atlas Tank Company, of which he was the owner. (This, providing he had lead exposure).

He stated he planned to proceed to dismantle these tanks as soon as possible. All work is to be done from the outside. The roof sheets will be removed first and then the top rings, thence to the ground. On the afternoon of 8-29 we received a call from Mr. C. M. Wheeler, assistant refinery superintendent, advising the construction crew was ready to tear down the tanks. Mr. Wheeler stated he would not give them clearance until he had approval from us. The afternoon of the 29th will be spent erecting the staging for the dismantling of these tanks. The writer will be in Lep the morning of the 30th to make a thorough check on the condition of these tanks.

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Preliminary information was passed along to Dr. Schradin on the morning of the 29th. He was advised the exposure took place Sunday morning and that two days had elapsed with apparently no ill effects to the men involved. Mr. Fitzgerald stated he felt very well and, of course, did not mention the other party (whose name has not been determined) as he insisted he was the only one in the tank. Following Dr. Schradin's advice, we are going to keep close check on these men for the next two days and will furnish a report.

H. A. BALL

BEB:JAC

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