

ETHYL GASOLINE CORPORATION

MANUFACTURING DEPARTMENT

INTER-OFFICE
CORRESPONDENCE

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July 8, 1936

Dr. R. A. Kehoe,

Dear Dr. Kehoe:

In June 1935 when Lew Barnum was making his original trip of inspection in regard to cleaning fluid storage tanks, he made a routine call at the Standard Oil Company (Indiana) refinery at Whiting, Ind. On the last occasion when that tank was emptied the scales showed a reading of about two thousand pounds, indicating the presence of sludge.

However, Barnum and Dr. Myrick, assistant superintendent of the refinery, agreed that the tank need not be cleaned. Dr. Myrick's attitude was that as long as the operation was perfectly satisfactory it would be unwise to meddle with the system. Considering the very large amount of fluid used at that refinery, we feel sure that a certain amount of sludge is continually being pumped from the tank to the gasoline storage tanks.

Since we are now considering plans for future operation of the tank cleaning unit, we are endeavoring to formulate a policy on cases of this nature. In this connection we are greatly interested in your opinion, especially as to the safety angles involved.

In discussing this question we think it advisable to note that before the crew begins the actual cleaning of the tank they have it washed with gasoline to remove as much as possible of the residual fluid. This procedure undoubtedly introduces sludge directly to the gasoline system. It is one of the steps in the general procedure approved by Dr. Machle, Dr. Schradin, Ed Walters, Tom Ronan and others at the time of the first job in Baton Rouge.

Some of us feel that lead ethyl sludge should be confined as closely as possible and should be removed from the Fluid storage tank before there is any chance of its being pumped to the gasoline tanks. Others hold the opinion that, since the company insists upon very strict regulations in the cleaning of tanks which have held lead-treated gasoline, the small quantity of lead sludge introduced along with the Fluid would not increase the hazard. They feel that Fluid storage tanks should not be cleaned until the amount of sludge present is large enough to interfere with the operation of the Fluid system.

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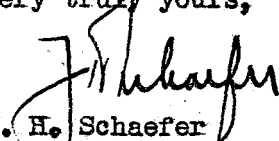
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It is evident that if we adopt the attitude that tanks should be cleaned before there is a possibility of any of the sludge being pumped into the gasoline system we shall have to make our activities in this field much more extensive than they have been in the past year. On the other hand if we assume that there is no danger in allowing the sludge to settle out in the gasoline tank we should curtail our activities so as to clean only those tanks where the accumulation is very large or tanks which are being withdrawn from service.

In this regard it is the opinion of the men of the crew that a great deal more sludge than was removed from any tank could accumulate before the operation of the system would be impaired.

We are quite eager to get an expression from you as to the safety factors involved so that we can adopt a uniform policy for our future operations.

Very truly yours,


J. H. Schaefer

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