

April 3, 1928

Mr. E. W. Webb,
Ethyl Gasoline Corp.,
25 Broadway,
New York City.

My dear Mr. Webb:

I take this opportunity of calling your attention to a matter which has been brought to my notice by Dr. Crudgington.

Dr. Crudgington has pointed out that at Baltimore and Baton Rouge (there may be other points at which the same matter has risen) the same men who are mixing ETHYL Fluid with ETHYL Gasoline are handling Benzol in considerable quantities. It is worth while, I think, to take notice of this fact for there are certain similarities in the injury brought about by ETHYL Fluid and by Benzol which would make it difficult for us to say with certainty that symptoms or physical signs which might arise were due with certainty to the one or to the other of these materials. It does not seem likely that any considerable injury will occur from the handling of Benzol, and yet it is a matter of general recognition that most men who work with Benzol do not regard it as an appreciable hazard and are inclined, therefore, to disregard such instructions as are given them in carrying out their work. Considering the responsibilities which the Ethyl Gasoline Corporation has assumed for the men who are handling ETHYL Fluid, it does not seem to be good policy to expose these workmen to two simultaneously occurring hazards which resemble each other. I do not suggest that anything drastic be done in this connection, but I think it worth while to call it to your attention, and I think it is further worth while to bring the entire matter to the attention of those responsible in order that misunderstandings may not arise. It would certainly be better if we could eliminate any possible misinterpretation of any signs and symptoms which may be developed by men handling ETHYL Fluid. You probably know that to this end we have insisted that these men should not be employed in treating oils and gasolines with "doctor" solution, since this introduces a further lead hazard.

I wish to call your attention also to another matter. Sometime ago I wrote a letter to Mr. Violette of the Standard Oil Company of Kentucky in regard to the inadequacy of their mixing plants at Port Tampa, Jacksonville and Savannah. Since that time certain changes have been made which are in the nature of improvements. However, at Port Tampa there is still no platform of any kind, the mixing being done out on the sand. This is perfectly satisfactory for most occasions, but you will understand at once that in case of a bad spill there is no satisfactory means of cleaning up the area. At Jacksonville there are not proper washing

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facilities either in the form of bath house or water supply at the mixing platform. I do not wish to write another letter to Mr. Violette about these matters for it is possible that they have already started the machinery for changing this. I would like very much, however, to have the unsatisfactory quality of these equipments pointed out to Mr. Harding or whomever is responsible for this territory, and to have this matter gone into carefully with the idea of bringing these equipments up to the full standard of our other equipments.

I am making a survey in the course of the next few months of all the mixing equipments throughout the country, and I expect to bring whatever pressure I can to bear on the management at any of these points where the equipment is deficient. At the same time it is worth while for our Engineering Staff to know what I have in mind in order that they may give whatever assistance is necessary and in order that they may appreciate fully the necessity for seeing to it that in the future there is no departure of any kind from the strict spirit of our rules and regulations. It is rather obvious, it seems to me, that the arrangement of one of these equipments without a mixing platform is a fundamental fault.

I am having Mr. Siebenthaler, as my representative, inspect and make a detailed report to me on the condition of all mixing points of the Standard Oil of Indiana. I am getting together, also, data on the condition of their employees and their absorption of lead as compared with employees at other mixing plants where the conditions are better. I shall be prepared in a reasonably short time to bring all these matters systematically to their attention in an effort to do away with the unsatisfactory equipments which they are now operating. When I have all this matter ready and am prepared to start the ball rolling, I shall let you know and shall ask you for such assistance as is possible in gaining our ends.

Very truly yours,

RAK:EJ

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