

December 19, 1933

Mr. Wm. F. Blank
Purchasing Agent
Board of Education
Cleveland, Ohio

Dear Sir:

A letter of yours addressed to E. I. DuPont de Nemours and Company concerning the use of leaded gasolines has described a somewhat circuitous course, and has reached my desk because this laboratory has been concerned with the investigation of the possible hazards which might be expected to arise from the use of gasolines containing tetraethyl lead. I am glad to make reply to your questions.

The possibility of the absorption of lead on the part of garage mechanics by reason of the lead content of gasoline has been carefully investigated. The evidence shows that the lead exposure involved is so slight that it can not be measured by any of the methods which we have employed and which have been effective in measuring the lead exposure of persons in dangerous lead trades. In fact there is no evidence that the use of lead in gasoline has increased the occupational hazards of garage mechanics. A scientific study of this subject is now in the hands of the publishers of the Journal of Industrial Hygiene. I trust it will appear within a reasonable period of time. This article is a description of the methods and results of studies which have been carried on over a period of years in this field.

The United States Public Service carried out an investigation some years ago on this subject. Information as to the result of this investigation can be obtained from the United States Public Health Service, and more particularly from Dr. R. R. Sayers who is in charge of the Industrial Hygiene Section of the Public Health Service.

I am not familiar with all the reasons for the failure of leaded gasoline to be distributed in France. I am sure, however, that there are a variety of reasons which have no necessary relation to public hygiene. As a matter of fact, there have been no investigations on this subject in France, and there has been a decided tendency on the part of the French

officials to accept in a general way the results of investigations carried out in both Great Britain and in the United States. I was not aware that the French government had forbidden the use of leaded gasoline, and in fact to my best knowledge this is not the case. So far as I know French officialdom has taken no action on the matter one way or the other.

I trust this will answer your questions but if I can give you any further information, or if you are interested in the details, I shall be pleased to comply with your further request for information.

Very truly yours,

RAK:IS

Robert A. Kehoe, M.D.

Copy to Mr. Sullivan

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