

October 14, 1952

Mr. Manfred Bowditch
Lead Industries Association
420 Lexington Avenue
New York City 17

Dear Manfred:

I return to you herewith the copy of Gehrman's draft of the data sheet on lead oxide, which I have edited rather carefully to bring it into accord with my own way of speaking. Incidentally Gehrman asked me originally to provide him with a write-up of this type, but I couldn't do it when he wanted it, and so he told me to forget it. He has done a good job of it, generally, I think, and my criticisms and suggestions, which I should be quite as willing to make to him as to you, are matters of detail rather than substance. Therefore, I have no objection to his knowing that I took a crack at it, and I'd like to tell him about it, as a matter of courtesy, unless you have good reason for wishing me not to do so. Since he is likely to recognize my hand in the matter, it would be well for me to tell him.

I think I have answered all of your questions by my editorial changes, but I may as well answer them directly.

1. I would never call a "lead line" a symptom of anything. Rather it is a physical sign (when lead is involved) that lead is present in the tissues in higher than normal concentration. I have changed the wording accordingly.

2. Gehrman's statement in the marked paragraph is true, but it is not entirely relevant. I have modified it accordingly, to speak to the principal point at issue.

3. This is a statement and request, rather than a query. I do not agree that this paragraph is confused in its proper context, but I'll not be stuffy about it, and I agree that it is not the best statement of the case for present purposes. The statement on which I have drawn was made for the specific purpose of being lifted out of context and applied. Therefore, with a very little modification I have quoted Gehrman's source to better effect. I can state it no better, and I may say that

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practically all of the confusion and controversy over this point has arisen from the fact that several people who cannot or do not read have accused me of saying something very different.

4. This paragraph has in it some serious errors of typing and fact, as well as of omission. These, I have corrected. I have also made some changes in the other paragraphs on page 3. The reasons for these will probably be apparent.

5. I have taken care of your query, and added several other necessary points to the precautions. As to smoking, it is difficult to prevent by fiat, and judgment must be exercised in the development and application of rules that seem reasonable and fair. The other matters are those which seem obvious but are not, for I have seen them violated with frequency in establishments that were thought to be satisfactory.

I believe this covers the situation. If I can help further, let me know. I regret that I have been slow in replying, but I have been working much longer hours than I should, trying to get caught up, while every day has continued to bring in its grist of things which have required attention. Unfortunately, I have work to do which has a greater priority on my time than matters of this sort, important as they are, so that if the Manufacturing Chemists Association thinks it can be caustic with me, directly or indirectly, it can individually and severally go to the devil. I have been compelled to let much more important jobs sit for years until the pressure of immediately urgent affairs has subsided, so that I remain unimpressed by other pressures, except those of colleagues and associates whose personal appeal is almost irresistible, except when there is a patient in distress.

Sincerely yours,

Robert A. Kehoe, M. D.

RAK ef

Enc.

P. S. Incidentally, if you are not aware of it, we are working on lead oxide at present and will examine other compounds in varying degrees of subdivision as we can through the years. The presently accepted tolerance, as you probably know, is a rule of thumb which will do until we get a better one. It applies only to lead oxide as dust, not as fume, and all of the compounds, and their degree of subdivision, as well as their dosage, are open to serious question. This need not influence this data sheet at this time, but it needs bearing in mind.

R.A.K.