

ETHYL GASOLINE CORPORATION

25 BROADWAY

NEW YORK April 25, 1929.

INTER-OFFICE
CORRESPONDENCE

Dr. Robert A. Kehoe,

Dear Dr. Kehoe:

The Surgeon General has called our attention to a letter addressed to him by one [REDACTED], 530 Federal Building, Buffalo, N.Y., copy of which is enclosed.

The Surgeon General has asked us whether or not we had any information in regard to the effect of tetraethyl lead in gasoline by splashing in the eyes, and also if we had any information in regard to experience of the various oil companies on the effect of plain gasoline in the eyes. It would also be interesting to know if there is any medical literature on the subject. We have assured him that we would furnish him at an early date any data or information we had on the subject.

Would appreciate any assistance you may render in connection with this matter so that we could pass it on to the Surgeon General in the very near future. I assume that he is naturally anxious to make a fairly prompt reply to Mr. [REDACTED] letter.

We are naturally interested in knowing something about the author of this letter and particularly the workmen's compensation case to which he refers. We know of no case of the character referred to in Buffalo, but have our suspicion that it is the one in which [REDACTED]—a former employee of the Rosen Economy Stations, Inc. at Jamestown, N.Y. about which we have corresponded with you—is involved. Our records show that [REDACTED] is a young fellow and worked at the Rosen Stations, where some twelve different kinds of gasoline, including two Ethyl Gasoline pumps, were used. David claimed that while draining gasoline from the tank of an automobile the gasoline splashed in his eyes. He reported the incident to his employer, immediately washed out his eyes and made no further reference to the matter until about a week later when he claimed that his eyes were smarting. A claim for compensation was filed against his employer. During the hearing before the compensation referee there was quite some testimony bearing upon the question as to whether or not the gasoline drained from the automobile tank by David was Ethyl Gasoline. The injured would in one breath claim that he knew it was by reason of the color, and then again would state that he did not know but had heard somebody in the employ of Rosen state that it was Ethyl Gasoline. In other words, the evidence on this point was most indefinite. So far as we know, the identity of the owner of the automobile from which the gasoline was drained is unknown, and there is no positive identification of Ethyl Gasoline as the product which was drained from the tank. Of course, someone may be

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Dr. Robert A. Kehoe - #2

April 25, 1929.

Recently we heard that [REDACTED] eyesight was very seriously impaired and was growing worse. So far as I know, we have never had an examination of [REDACTED] and it might be just as well for us not to ask for one for the reason that if our present information regarding the cause of his affliction is true it will be most difficult to establish any connection between our product and that which got in his eyes.

Quite irrespective, of course, of the identity of the person about whom this man [REDACTED] has written to the Surgeon General, it behooves us to fully apprise the Surgeon General of any facts or information we may have regarding the influence, if any, of Ethyl fluid in gasoline upon the eye.

Yours very truly,

W. W. Webb

A:H

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C O P Y

530 Federal Bldg.,
Buffalo, N.Y.
April 16, 1929.

Surgeon General Hugh Cumming,
U.S. Public Health Service,
Washington, D.C.

Dear Sir:

In a recent workmen's compensation case which has come to my attention, a young man of 17 has lost approximately 80% of his eyesight by having ethyl gasoline splashed into his eyes.

I do not seem to be able to find any information on this subject, that is, the effect of tetra ethyl lead on the eyes, and I am wondering if you have any information on this subject.

I thank you in advance for any information you can give me.

Yours very truly,

(signed) LESLIE O. WRIGHT

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