

November 6, 1930

Mr. A. E. Mittnacht.

Dear Mr. Mittnacht:

Thanks for your letter of October 31
commenting on the Champlin fire.

I think you are entirely right in saying that we are not in position to enforce the selection of pumps for mixing equipment at the refineries. I should not wish to attempt such a thing, which I regard as outside our province. I believe therefore, the only thing we can do in this connection is to suggest on the basis of our experience, such things as might be desirable in connection with these pumps. Naturally enough, whatever occurs is not our loss, and it is not therefore strictly speaking, our affair. This is especially true since the hazards from the point of view of lead would appear not to be remarkably great. Neither would I require changes in the existing equipment, though I believe it would be wise to look into the matter and see just what our situation is in this respect. We may not always be so fortunate as we were in the case of the present accident.

Very truly yours,

RAK:EJ

KE 0000626

ETHYL GASOLINE CORPORATION

CHRYSLER BUILDING

135 EAST 42ND STREET

NEW YORK October 31, 1930.

**INTER-OFFICE
CORRESPONDENCE**

Dr. R. A. Kehoe,

Dear Dr. Kehoe:

Regarding the Champlin fire, of course it has been recognized for some time that electric pumps are not as safe around refineries as those operated by steam. However, gasoline fires, after all, are a problem of the refineries and on the presumption, which has been pretty well proven, that ETHYL fluid will not catch on fire until considerable heat has been generated, I am wondering if we should undertake to dictate what kind of pumps are to be used in connection with Ethyl Gasoline mixing when there are thousands of other pumps around the refineries which could just as easily cause gasoline fires or a general conflagration. In other words, would we be any safer by requiring a steam pump at the Ethyl mixing plant and permit the refinery to use electric pumps in their other operations. It just happened that this particular fire was caused by the electric pump that was located at the Ethyl blending plant but it could have been caused as easily by any of the other pumps on the premises.

I agree with your suggestion entirely that it is certainly safer not to have electric pumps but I am just wondering if it is within our province to require a given type of pump to be used under the circumstances related above.

I also agree with you with regard to the sprinkler system because once a refinery catches on fire and gets well under way all the water in the world isn't going to stop it.

If you desire, we can require that the pumps that are used in connection with Ethyl blending be steam driven. However, I won't do anything about this until I receive your further comments. In the event you set up this ruling do you think it necessary to require changes to be made in the existing equipment. I think that there would be many protests if we adopted such an attitude.

Yours very truly,

W. W. Tracht

C:C

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