

April 21, 1939

Mr. J. H. Schaefer
Ethyl Gasoline Corporation
Chrysler Building
New York City
New York

Dear Mr. Schaefer:

I am sorry indeed that I had to run out without seeing you Wednesday afternoon. I knew there were a number of things that had to be done but I made the mistake of underestimating the time that would be required to do them, and at the last I found it necessary to hurry to catch my train. I would very much prefer to talk over with you the several things which I had in mind, but in order that they may not be delayed unduly or neglected, I think it wise to take care of them through correspondence.

1. Some time ago you spoke to me about some degree of interference with the activities of your Traffic Department by reason of arrangements made or suggested by safety representatives of the Corporation for the transportation of Fluid to plants of customers. At that time I was in essential agreement with you that your people, by reason of their experience, should know this problem better than anyone else in the organization. Since that time my attention has been called to several situations which have made it apparent to me that I agreed with you in this matter somewhat hastily in that by so doing I neglected one or two matters of general policy with reference to safety which had been in existence for a long time. I think it worth while to call your attention to these matters for the reason that it seems necessary that there should be coordination in these matters between your Traffic Department and representatives of the Corporation who have to do with the construction of mixing plants. In the construction of such plants, it is often necessary to survey the situation and to determine what are the best facilities for the transportation of Fluid in order that the plant may be built in accordance with these facilities. That is to say, these plants are built so as to be adapted to Fluid received in drums by truck, Fluid received in drums by rail, Fluid received in motor tank trucks and Fluid received in tank cars. The question of transportation, therefore, has to be decided before the plant is built, and after it has been built on the basis of one set of arrangements, it is a little late to modify the method of transportation. Accordingly

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before decisions are rendered on these points, there should be an agreement between your Traffic Department and the safety engineers as to the most desirable plan for receiving Fluid. This agreement in advance would obviate any subsequent discussion of the matter and any more or less arbitrary position on the part of one department of the Corporation which might subsequently be embarrassing to another.

In this connection I wish to cite a recent example. You will understand, I am sure, that I do it not to criticize anyone but rather to point a moral. Mr. McCoolley, I believe, it was, recently made arrangements at one of the Jersey plants for the plant to be built to accommodate rail shipments of Ethyl Fluid in drums. It was his opinion that this type of plant and this method of transportation represented the safest means of handling this situation. I may say that I agree with him wholly and implicitly in this position. When, however, the order for shipment was made, your Traffic Department demurred at transportation by rail, and without communicating with anyone else, was insistent in their suggestion that boat transportation was the desirable method of shipment. Boat transportation was cheaper but, in my opinion, it was not otherwise better since I think we all recognize that there is a certain hazard in connection with boat shipments, particularly when there must be repeated handling, such as is not necessarily involved in direct rail transportation. I have no doubt Mr. Gresslin felt he was quite right in making his recommendations with reference to the transportation of these drums, since he was working within the limits of your transportation policies and practices. I am equally sure that Mr. McCoolley thought he was right in the arrangements which he made. As a matter of fact, both men were right within a limited policy but neither was considering the thing in its completed aspects and, therefore, both were in some measure wrong in their activities. Frankly, from a safety point of view, Mr. McCoolley was more nearly right than Mr. Gresslin.

May I suggest, in view of the above instance and similar instances which may arise, that a general arrangement be made between you and Mr. Lewis whereby the activities of your department will be coordinated so that the final plans for the construction of plants will be directly related to the best available methods for the transportation of Fluid. In this way the expert knowledge of the representatives of the Corporation will be put to full use, no one's feelings will be hurt and there will not be the embarrassing situation in relation to a customer that one department of the Corporation offers one type of advice with which another department is not in agreement. Generally speaking I may say that the men

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at the manufacturing plant are not adequately familiar with the safety and operating problems involved at mixing plants while, on the other hand, safety representatives of the Corporation are not adequately familiar with the details of the preparation and transportation of Fluid at the manufacturing plant. It is not altogether necessary that these men should be familiar in detail with each other's work. They should, however, work in harmony.

I have talked these matters over with Oscar Lewis and I suggest that you and he get together as to the proper means of coordinating these activities.

2. With reference to the inclusion of certain information with respect to the manufacturing of tetraethyl lead and Ethyl Fluid in the operating manual for safety engineers, I have a suggestion to offer to which I would like to have your reaction. Incidentally I have asked Lewis to get together in whatever form he considers desirable all of the material for this manual that concerns the activities of safety engineers in their routine work. I expect to edit the entire thing word by word, but I shall not decide upon arbitrary changes without some consultation with him. I consider it desirable to include some more or less general but accurate information as to the manufacturing processes and hazards. I need not go further in this than you think is desirable, but I think our technical people should be sufficiently familiar with these matters that they can speak in a generally intelligent fashion to customers of the Corporation when they are asked for information. Moreover they will have a better idea, I think, of the relative hazards of different parts of the entire industry if they are provided with general information. I am not wholly convinced of the quantity of material which should be included in the manual. I should be prepared to discuss that with you in any detail you like. Nevertheless I think it would be wise for you to give some consideration to this question. I shall be prepared to edit everything that you say, but again not arbitrarily.

As to the historical account of the development of the Corporation in relation to hazardous situations, I expect to prepare this material myself and when the time comes, I shall be glad to have suggestions or criticisms from yourself and others.

3. As to the problem of medical care of Ethyl Gasoline employees at Baton Rouge, I shall give some study to this question and I shall hope to have an opportunity to discuss it with you in some detail when we meet

in Detroit on May 12th. If there are any matters which are urgently in need of attention or discussion before that time, I will expect you to bring them to my notice.

Very truly yours,

RAK:ls

Robert A. Kehoe, M.D.