

Salt Lake City, Utah

July 18, 1939

Dr. H. H. Schrenk, Chief Chemist
Health Division, U. S. Department of the Interior
4800 Forbes Street
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Dear Dr. Schrenk:

Your letter of July 11th concerning a statement on the threshold limit of lead mentioned in Dr. Kehoe's paper before the Northwestern University Medical School in September, 1937, was forwarded to me here in the field. This is the second time that my attention has been called to the fact that Dr. Kehoe has quoted us as stating that approximately three milligrams of lead per ten cubic meters of air has been substantially established as the threshold of toxicity of inhaled lead. As you know, our tentative limit of toxicity for lead was established as a result of the lead storage battery study conducted by our division in 1930, and the figure is 1.5 milligrams in ten cubic meters of air as determined under the conditions of our study. At no time have we ever deviated in any of our statements from this figure. It may also interest you to know that recently we have completed a rather extensive study in the lead storage battery industry throughout the United States, and although our findings have as yet not been published, preliminary analysis of the data corroborate the findings of our earlier study with reference to the threshold limit.

Perhaps Dr. Kehoe obtained the impression that three milligrams was our suggested limit from listening to a talk I once gave in Indiana before the General Motors Physicians, on the occasion of our being together on the same program. At that time I stated that our tentative limit for lead was 1.5 milligrams, but my experience in many of the lead using industries indicated that the concentrations were so high, that extensive reduction in lead poisoning could be effected if concentrations were reduced to three, or even five milligrams. However, I also recall adding that complete elimination of lead poisoning would not be attained unless lead concentrations were reduced to approximately one or two milligrams, since confidential information which I had at that time on the experience of a British Accumulator Plant indicated that lead poisoning still occurred with concentrations slightly above two milligrams.

I am sending copy of this letter to Dr. Kehoe, who I am sure will be interested in knowing my views on the subject and who will be just as desirous of knowing the facts as you are.

Trusting that I have made myself clear in this matter and with kindest personal regards, I am,

Sincerely yours

J. J. Bloomfield
J. J. Bloomfield, Sanitary Engineer

JJB:RM