

From the desk of

DR. ROBERT A. KEHOE

Dr. Saunders:

Since I have to keep a complete file
of all available information on all of these
potential medical-legal cases, and am held
personally responsible for them and for any
testimony that may be required - as long
as I am available - I have

the letter to eff my and need in my
now way the not intended as a
criticism, although the first sentence of the
second paragraph will put me in a
somewhat bad position with a
clever attorney
that I have

June 6, 1957

sed to Ethyl Corporation, has come to me, as

ining tetraethyl lead at filling stations, in bulk
ever caused any cases of lead poisoning/the
periods of its use. There were cases of
poisoning among men engaged in the manufacture of tetraethyl lead during
the early period of the development of manufacturing processes, and there
was a time when such cases occurred in connection with the cleaning and
repairing of large gasoline storage tanks, (in which the type of exposure is
totally different). It is these cases that have been responsible for the idea,
which still exists in some parts of the country, that the ordinary handling of
gasoline is dangerous from the aspect of its lead content. The truth of the
matter is that this problem was investigated very extensively in the early
days of the use of leaded gasoline, and it was shown that no such danger
existed under ordinary circumstances. The reason back of this safety is
that the lead content of the gasoline is so low that, (1) there is no measurable
absorption of lead during contact of the gasoline with the skin, and (2) the
vapor given off from gasoline in open containers contains only negligible
amounts of lead. It is for these reasons that leaded gasoline could be marketed,
for if the facts had been otherwise, this type of gasoline could never have been
used.

I am quite sure, therefore, that Mr. McElvain was not poisoned by tetraethyl
lead and that the physicians at the Veterans' Hospital were correct in their
opinion. It is of some importance, in this connection, to know that the absorp-
tion of lead in this form does not damage the peripheral nerves so as to produce
a neuritis. At least, we have never seen a case of neuritis even in the cases
that have been known to be due to the absorption of tetraethyl lead in large
quantities in the operations to which I referred previously.

The report of the finding of lead in your husband's urine "at the upper limits
of normal" tends in itself (dependent upon how and where the analyses were

KE 0017469

an
probability of being legal
without to engine, so long as I am
avoided. I thought that this
was bound to all of the stuff.

Heir does not apply strictly as
in the field, if it can be dealt with
privately, in the apt, even as

if there is any doubt as to the
necessity. Legal procedure is not the
controlling factor, since I am personally
responsible for what is to be done.

See lines. Legal procedure is not the
controlling factor, since I am personally
responsible for what is to be done.

See lines. Legal procedure is not the
controlling factor, since I am personally
responsible for what is to be done.

Bob X

June 6, 1957

Mrs. Ernest Mc Elvain
Box 217
Calhan, California

Dear Mrs. McElvain:

Your letter of May 28, addressed to Ethyl Corporation
Medical Director, for reply.

The handling of gasoline containing tetraethyl lead
stations and refineries has never caused any c
United States during the entire period of its
poisoning among men engaged in the manufa
the early period of the development of man
was a time when such cases occurred in c
ring of large gasoline storage tank
different). It is these cases that
exists in some parts of the
problem was inv
gasoline