

January 12, 1939

Mr. E. P. Burk
Pure Oil Company
Newark, Ohio

Dear Mr. Burk:-

Some time ago when I received, indirectly, the request that I have one of my associates examine certain men in your employ, I asked Mr. N. D. Siebenthaler, Safety Engineer of Ethyl Gasoline Corporation, to look into the situation and to report to me concerning it. Some days ago I received Mr. Siebenthaler's report indicating that certain of your employees have had boils and various other types of skin irritation which have been attributed by them and, apparently by one or more doctors, to contact with gasoline.

I am led to believe from Mr. Siebenthaler's report that you are not of the opinion that leaded gasoline is more open to suspicion than other gasolines in relation to these conditions. In any case I should like to point out to you that not only gasoline but many other petroleum products are capable of producing dermatitis and also of contributing to the production of recurrent boils. In general, with respect to the latter, it can be said that dirt or grit is an important factor. Over a period of years we have seen a fair proportion of filling station men and garage mechanics affected, particularly on their lower extremities, with small pimples and boils as a consequence of both dirt and grease on their clothing. The avoidance of contact with petroleum products and suitable attention to personal cleanliness will easily dispose of these within a reasonable period of time. As to ordinary gasoline dermatitis, one finds a considerable variation among men as to the type and severity of this condition. There is no question of the ability of gasoline to produce dermatitis quite independent of other factors. The lead content of the gasoline has been found both by experience and by experimental observations to be harmless with respect to skin lesions. As a matter of fact, the concentrated Ethyl Fluid is by no means as irritating to the skin as is gasoline, and in this

connection it will be of interest to you to know that there have never been cases of dermatitis among workers in the manufacture of tetraethyl lead and Ethyl Fluid.

I trust that this problem among your employees will be settled without any difficulties. However I wish to assure you that if you feel that we could be of assistance to you in clearing up this difficulty, I should be quite willing to ask one of my men to look into the situation and to examine one or more men, and to give them such advice and reassurance as the circumstances may require.

Very truly yours,

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Robert A. Kahoe, M.D.