

October 28, 1941.

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

Dear Mr. Schaefer:

I have looked over the project for enclosing the stills in the manufacturing buildings at Deepwater. I have also given serious thought to the problem presented by this project from the point of view of the use of materials needed for defense purposes. I have come to the conclusion that your approval of this project is justified.

In view of our conversation in New York, I think I should explain the means of my arrival at this conclusion. As I pointed out to you, we have not obtained data which would demonstrate the usefulness, from anhygienic point of view, of enclosing these stills at the Baton Rouge plant. Mr. Stecher is fully convinced that the reason for our failure to find these beneficial effects lies in the fact that there is a further source of lead exposure (from furnace stacks), which tends to mask other factors. This may or may not be the case, and only time will tell. On the other hand, the still floors have given rise to considerable lead exposure, and I can not escape the belief that the unit enclosure of these stills is sound hygienic practice. Eventually, when we have been able to study the situation, factor by factor, we shall find these enclosures highly advantageous. Accordingly, it is my belief that the expenditure is justified from an hygienic point of view. I justify this expenditure at this time in relation to the national defense by pointing out that both we and Dr. Evans are somewhat troubled by the frequency with which certain mild symptoms appear among the plant personnel. Certainly, there is every justification in industry in general, and in this industry specifically, to maintain operating personnel in healthy and efficient manner. We have no reason to believe that serious difficulties among the men will occur, but we are beginning to be a little anxious on this score, and I believe that we ought not to take any chance which can be avoided by the expenditure of a reasonable amount of money and the use of a moderate amount of material. Certainly, the expenditure here is not exorbitant, and the material required is not very great.

If this were a departure from our previous program, and if in any way it could be interpreted as taking advantage of the national defense emergency to make improvements, I would feel

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very differently about it. However, this project is, in fact, a part of a systematic effort which we have been making over a period of years to further reduce a potentially serious occupational hazard. One may question seriously, therefore, whether we are justified at this time in abandoning a program which we have considered, and still consider, a logical step in providing safety for an important group of industrial workers. If in this connection we take a position which is a little different from that taken by management in certain other industries, we can still justify it I believe, since I think we know more about the problem than most other people do, and, therefore, we have a greater responsibility.

I trust this will convey my ideas. If you are not in agreement with them, I should appreciate having your comments.

Very truly yours,

Robert A. Kehoe, M. D.

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