

September 21, 1961

Dr. George F. Kirb,
Ethyl Corporation
100 Park Avenue
New York 17, New York

Dear George:

A letter came from you on July 28, enclosing a letter from Dr. Lloyd B. Tepper (which I return to you herewith). I am now engaged in clearing up the last of the correspondence which accumulated in my absence, and I have pondered a bit over your request for advice as to how to reply to this letter. I am at some loss to know what to say. Advice is cheap, but good advice is not so easily come by.

It is entirely possible that Dr. Tepper's interest in this matter is reasonable and legitimate on technical or hygienic grounds. I cannot help thinking, however, that he should have known that this was a somewhat unusual request to make of a commercial organization, and that therefore, he should have felt it necessary - or at least appropriate - to give some explanation of why he wanted an answer. I am not sure of my ground, but I think I would ask him, thereby making it clear that this is, in general, private information which has been supplied to USPHS in the public interest but is not given out lightly. It is probably true that he can obtain the information from USPHS. On the other hand, the Service would hold this information in confidence if they were requested to do so (unless the public welfare was at stake). That is to say that I think they would, for they have so held other matters of similar importance.

I cannot presume to judge this matter from the aspect of its possible remote effects upon Ethyl Corporation, but certainly you are not prepared to give out such information as this to any person who may inquire. It just isn't done, and it would also be a chore. Certainly, on the other hand, you will not wish to offend a reasonable man who may have made a reasonable request. I think, therefore, despite the extra trouble involved in this one instance, I'd ask him why he wants this information. Perhaps you could even put your query on the basis of supplying the information in a manner that would make it most useful to him for his purpose. For example, the manner in which tetraethyllead is used, whether in pure form or in a complex composition, or the manner of its transportation, may be pertinent. I am not trying here to make the problem of supplying the information more complex, but rather of the means of avoiding misleading or incomplete information. I have encountered so many odd and false ideas about tetraethyllead that I, instinctively almost, try to head them off.

I am sure that as one technically trained man to another (I hope this

Dr. George F. Kirby

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is true of Dr. Tepper, whom I don't know), you can combine a degree of critique with courtesy in such a way as to indicate that Ethyl Corporation is not unduly reticent and cautious in providing relevant and useful information.

I may be making more of this matter in my reply than it is worth, but perhaps my comments will be helpful to you. I hope so.

Sincerely yours,

Robert A. Kehoe, M. D.

RAK:ss

Enclosure

RE 0012301

ETHYL CORPORATION

RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

July 28, 1961

PLEASE ADDRESS REPLY
TO: P. O. BOX 341
BATON ROUGE 1, LA.

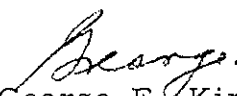
Dr. Robert A. Kehoe
Kettering Laboratories
Eden & Bethesda Aves.
Cincinnati 19, Ohio

Dear Bob:

I would like to know what advice you can give me on the attached letter from Dr. Tepper of Harvard. He is asking, apparently, for the same type of information which we are continuing to supply the U. S. Public Health Service once a year.

I do not believe that we have ever made a practice of supplying such information to private groups or individuals. On the other hand, the Harvard people probably could get the information via USPHS. How do you think I ought to reply?

Sincerely,


George F. Kirby

GFK/mm
Encls.

N13359.01

KE 0012392

August 4, 1961

Dr. George Kirby
Ethyl Corporation
100 Park Avenue
New York 17, New York

Dear Doctor Kirby:

Your letter of July 28th with enclosure has arrived at the office during the absence of Dr. Kehoe on his vacation. As soon as he returns on or about the 5th September the matter will be brought to his attention.

Very truly yours,

S. Skora, Secretary to
Dr. Robert A. Kehoe

N13359.02

KE 0012393