

# LIBERTY MUTUAL



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July 20, 1971

Dr. Robert A. Kehoe  
Kettering Laboratory  
University of Cincinnati  
College of Medicine  
Eden Avenue  
Cincinnati, Ohio 45219

Dear Dr. Kehoe:

Liberty Mutual Insurance Company insures a policyholder who makes lead icicles for Christmas trees. The lead content of these icicles is 88%. I do not know what constitutes the other 12%.

Dr. J. F. Cole of the Lead Industries Association, Inc. in a letter dated May 25, 1971, to Revere Copper and Brass states, "For many years, research has been conducted on the causes of lead intoxication. The picture is quite clear in that repeated dosages of lead in soluble form are always required to produce lead poisoning. One could foresee that a child could ingest a piece of lead foil. However, this would not likely take place rapidly over an extended period of time. Also, lead metal is only very slightly soluble in gastric juices. Lead pigment and salts which have been implicated in past cases of intoxication are much more soluble than lead metal. In my opinion, there would be very little potential hazard from the use of lead foil as described above."

Dr. Cole goes on to state that you should be contacted for an expert opinion.

We are interested in this problem from a products liability point of view. If a small child can contract lead poisoning from ingestion of these icicles, the liability costs could be enormous.

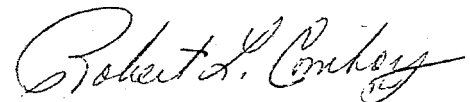
We would appreciate an opinion on the toxicity of ingesting metallic lead in this form especially by small children.

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you consider this material toxic, we hope to persuade the policyholder to label his product warning of the potential hazard.

Thank you very much.



ROBERT L. COMBOY  
Industrial Hygienist  
Loss Prevention Dept.

RLC/nw