

Lead Industries Association

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June 2, 1948

Robert A. Kehoe, M.D., Director
Kettering Laboratory of Applied Physiology
University of Cincinnati
College of Medicine
Eden Avenue
Cincinnati 19, Ohio

Dear Bob:

The magazine "Town & Country" has posed to the National Lead Company the queries embodied in my enclosure and they have, in turn, passed the buck along to us.

My offhand reaction to this problem, another of the many non-industrial items that find their way to my desk, would be that there would be greater hazard to health from water drained from lead painted roofs on which the paint was allowed to deteriorate than from such roofs which were kept well painted. My thought in this is simply that flaking and chalking of the paint would be a more serious hazard than any toxicity from surfaces covered with a sound coat of lead paint.

I doubt if any real study of this problem has ever been made but would think that you would be more likely to have worth while thoughts on the subject than anyone else in view of your quests for lead in odd parts of the globe.

Apart from any actual study or research, there appear to be two quite diametrically opposed schools of thought on this general subject. On the one hand, I understand that the American Water Works Association recommends red lead primers for the interior of water storage tanks, while at the other extreme is the Health Department of Queensland, Australia, which flatly prohibits the painting of any roofs whatsoever with any sort of lead paint, the theory behind this presumably being that rainwater in the more arid parts of Australia may be used for drinking purposes.

If you are willing to give me the benefit of your thoughts on the above, the kindness will be much appreciated.

Sincerely yours,

