

April 16, 1946.

Mr. W. E. Mitchell, Manager
Anaconda Reduction Department.

Dear Mr. Mitchell:

Several days prior to March 31st 1946 we posted notices in the various departments to the effect that all safety equipment such as goggles, respirators and faceshields which were held by our employees were to be returned to the safety office.

As a result of our action a total of 1086 employees returned equipment to us and approximately an additional 25 who were not sure whether or not they had equipment charged against them came to check their status. We were organized to receive equipment at the end of the 3 - 11 shift on March 30th and 11-7 shift which terminated on the morning of March 31st but as word of the postponement of the threatened strike came during the afternoon of March 30th we discontinued taking in equipment. Had we continued to accept equipment until 7:00 A. M. of March 31st I am sure that the total would have far exceeded the 1086.

Many individuals had several pieces of safety equipment charged against them. Receipts were issued to each individual who returned equipment.

It is interesting to note that the replacement cost, calculated at wholesale prices, of the equipment which was returned totals \$5120.00. I fully realize that if we had failed to have this equipment returned that it would not have represented a complete loss to us but by having it returned considerable confusion and claims of lost and stolen equipment would have been avoided.

All equipment which was returned was carefully checked and defective items were repaired or discarded. That which was saved was thoroughly scrubbed, sterilized and otherwise re-conditioned as needed.

I have estimated that 10% to 15% of the respirators which were returned had not been giving adequate respiratory protection to the wearers. These have been discarded and respirators of good quality are being issued as replacements. Approximately 20% of the faceshields which were returned were not in proper condition for safe usage.

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The general attitude of the men as they appeared to turn in their equipment was congenial and I believe that our experience has shown conclusively that a system of making the individual responsible for his personal protective equipment can and does work successfully. I also feel that collectively our employees are appreciative of the service which we have given them.

Trusting that the above information may be of some interest and value to you, I am,

Yours very truly,

W. J. Needham
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