

December 8, 1961

CONFIDENTIAL

Mr. Robert P. Restrepo
Director of Manufacturing
Price Battery Corporation
Hamburg
Pennsylvania

Dear Mr. Restrepo:

Having completed and mailed my memorandum to you and your associates, I have obtained the file of results obtained from time to time by the analysis of the blood of certain of your employees. While I entered into the initial correspondence with your people, I have not had anything to do with the reports since 1959, when I turned this part of our work over to Dr. Alvin Davis and Dr. Lee Miller. They have interpreted the results faithfully in their reports, but perhaps they have not emphasized their significance sufficiently under the circumstances.

I am not sure what changes, if any, have been made in the physical state of your plant since 1959, but I have noted a series of findings obtained in 1960. These confirm fully the impressions gained at the time of my visit. While the specific occupations or work locations of the men are not given on the information sheets attached to the analytical reports, it is significant that ten of the fifteen men who provided samples of blood in 1960, had absorbed dangerous quantities of lead, and might be expected to develop symptoms of intoxication at any time thereafter, if they were to continue at their work. I do not imply that they would certainly do so, for this is not always the case, but there was danger, in each case, that such might occur.

I have noted in the file the correspondence concerning the possible contamination of the creek with lead gaining entrance to it from your plant. There are two problems here to be dealt with. The one is that lead may dissolve in the water (or be suspended in it) at the time of the run-off into the stream. Such lead will be carried away, at least for some distance. The other problem is that the undissolved lead compounds may settle out in the stream bed, and lie there as a source of continuing contamination for months, until a real flood clears out the stream-bed and takes the silt elsewhere (hopefully diluting it with other water borne soil and debris), or perhaps, in a protected stream, the silt deposits and remains locally for years. These effects should be prevented by separating out the suspended material before it leaves the plant, and by precipitating out (in a settling basin or chemical receptacle) soluble lead in an effective manner. The waste water entering the stream from the plant should

not have a high concentration of lead either in suspension or in solution, or both. It should, in my opinion, be at most, low enough so that the concentration within the stream, after admixture with the effluent from the plant, does not exceed 0.1 mg. per liter of water. This will insure that the living things in the stream will survive, and that the water can be used by domestic animals with safety. The specification set (or followed in regulatory procedure) by some of the States in some instances, even when the volume of the body of water into which waste water is emptied is very large in relation to that of the effluent water, in that the discharged waste water must be reduced in its lead content to 1 part per million (i.e., 1 mg. of Pb per liter). This of course is difficult to do, and is not always necessary. However, the laws of the country, with respect to its public waters and waterways, will move in the direction of the pattern set by the States that are most exacting. The handwriting is on the wall with respect to this matter, and it is the better part of wisdom to be prepared to meet the requirements.

I can ill afford all the time I am spending on your Company's affairs, for I am hard pressed by other accumulated duties. However, yours is a serious problem, and I wish to be sure that I am giving it the attention which it deserves.

Cordially yours,

Robert A. Kehoe, M. D.

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