

File under Midgley

June 9, 1936

Dr. R. L. Shriner
University of Illinois
Department of Chemistry
Urbana, Illinois

Dear Dr. Shriner:

Thanks very much for your note concerning lubricating oil being used as an insecticide. It is my opinion that it would take quite a good deal of lead to kill a cow, certainly well over ten grams. Four per cent lead is possible in the lubricating oil, although most of it is in the form of solid particles which settle quite rapidly. Even on this basis "Bossy" must drink somewhere in the neighborhood of a half pint of lubricating oil to obtain a lethal dose of lead. This is a lot of oil for any cow.

Despite the above remarks, I most certainly consider it very dangerous practice to use spent lubricating oils which may contain lead. Even if a lubricating oil did not contain lead, I am sure that any appreciable quantity taken internally will show decidedly toxic effects due to the types of organic acids, aldehydes, ketones and other oxidation products.

Best regards.

Very truly yours,

TM:p

Thomas Midgley, Jr.

(Any replies address to Worthington Ohio.)