

October 21, 1955

Mr. Manfred Bowditch - (2) - October 21, 1955

It is unfortunate that so little is available, by way of "before and after" photographs of hazardous situation in the lead trades. In general, however, industrial management has been loathe to release such photographs, which industrial hygienists have been too concerned to get the job done to provide recordings of their activities.
New York City 17

Dear Manfred:

As you may have suspected from the fact that the infant, [REDACTED], was in the Children's Hospital in Cincinnati, and that the information concerning the cause of the child's death came out of the Hamilton County Coroner's office, the report of the cause of his death is true. I have no brief for the manner of the newspaper reporting, but obviously the coroner's acts are open to press reporting. (You probably know that this Laboratory does the pathologic and toxicologic work of the Coroner of Hamilton County, via an agreement between the University and the County officials, through certain staff members as deputies to the Coroner, equivalent to the Medical Examinership of certain eastern counties or cities.)

The child died on the day of admission to the Children's Hospital, having had convulsions and other evidences of encephalopathy. There are some doubt about the diagnosis because of the existence of a minor epidemic of viral encephalitis in the vicinity of his home, but the necropsy and analysis of the tissues resolved the doubt. The liver, kidney and vertebra contained, respectively 5.5, 8.0 and 8.0 mg. of lead per 100 grams. (The brain was not sectioned at once, and although its analysis would provide us with another interesting datum, this is not required for purposes of diagnosis.) There is sufficient evidence of an immediately dangerous level of recent absorption, and the negative evidence, otherwise, settles the issue for all practical purposes.

Sincerely yours,

Robert A. Kehoe, M. D.

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P.S. I have a note from Joe Costello of Ethyl Corporation (enclosing your letter and copy of Lloyd Hamlin's request for photographs.) I undertook some time ago to obtain a systematic coverage of typical procedures in the manufacture of tetraethyl lead. The job has not been completed, for a number of reasons, but if the photographs were available, they would be of little value to Hamlin, because of the unusual character of the plants and the exposure.

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