

July 27, 1971

Mr. Terry O'Keefe
Kidwell, O'Keefe & Williamson
200 West Douglas
Wichita, Kansas 67202

Dear Mr. O'Keefe:

I hasten to reply to your letter of July 21, and to explain my present situation to you. Before doing so, however, I shall inform you about Julian Chisolm, Jr., M.D. He is a specialist in Children's diseases in Baltimore, in the Department of Pediatrics of Johns Hopkins Medical School and in the Pediatric Division of the Baltimore City Hospitals, Baltimore, Maryland. He is a very busy man, who has been treating children for years and studying the problem of lead poisoning in children in Baltimore for years. He is one of the best informed persons in this (or other) country on this problem and has done much to alleviate this problem in which Baltimore has been heavily involved. He is not in the field of medicine about which you are concerned, and I doubt very much that he will enter directly into such a problem, except by commenting on it in writing. This is not to suggest that you should not communicate with him if you so desire, but is merely my opinion based on my knowledge of Dr. Chisolm's work and primary activity.

As for myself, I cannot help you now for I am leaving for a much needed vacation in a few days, to be out of circulation for a month. I shall return home near the first of September, and I can see you and discuss your situation or that of your client's at that time. I do not seek tasks of this type, for I have retired from the direction of this Laboratory, and am engaged primarily in publishing the results of the work of many years. However, I do consult in such matters as you have referred to, and I make use of the staff and facilities of this Laboratory in investigating such situations as you have described. If you care to wait a month or somewhat more, I shall be available.

The work done in the Laboratory by staff members would be charged to you (or your clients) at the cost (to the Laboratory) of the traveling and time of technical persons involved in sampling and analyses (whether of air or vegetation or of blood and urine of exposed persons). This, of course, is subject to discussion and agreement as to what is to be done. In your case, a fair amount of such work would be required to establish the facts in the case. This is work with which we are familiar after many years of experience. My fees are determined by the amount of time which I have to spend in visiting the premises, determining what must be done, and in reporting on findings and their significance. One cannot enter into such a situation as this, legally or medically, without knowing certain essential facts, and I would not testify in such a case without adequate knowledge. All of the requirements would be discussed with you in advance so that you would know how far you and your clients would be committed. I charge \$150.00 for every full day during which my own work must be set aside, and proportionally for every fraction of a day. Traveling expense, and other out-of-pocket expense agreed upon would be added.

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Mr. Terry O'Keefe

Page 2

July 27, 1971

Incidentally, the situation which you describe is not an especially unusual one. The usual pattern of the emission of lead compounds from such a plant as you mention, affects the local forage crops for animals, without injuring to any very great extent the people who live in the neighborhood. Moreover, the sulfur dioxide is actually more of a nuisance (because of the unpleasant smell and irritation) than a serious matter. This depends, of course, upon the actual severity of the conditions, which I am not attempting to appraise, except on the basis of past experience. The reason for the situation which I have written about, is that the animals eat contaminated forage in large amounts and so take in quite a large amount of lead. People, on the contrary do not eat forage. The roots and fruits which they eat contain (after ordinary washing) very little lead, while the animal flesh which they eat is also low in its lead content. Thus, only what they breathe in is involved, and this (in the neighborhood of a plant) is usually small. I shall be in Cincinnati until August 2nd, if you wish to telephone me about this before I leave town, the telephone, by direct dialing is (513) 872-5781.

Very truly yours,

Robert A. Kehoe, M.D.
Professor Emeritus of
Occupational Medicine

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