

RG 90 USPHS

Box 88 JUL, 0875-96-

IN REPLYING PLEASE QUOTE

2021 General

ADDRESS COMMUNICATIONS TO
FEDERAL TRADE COMMISSIONFEDERAL TRADE COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF COUNSEL

June 9, 1936

Surgeon General
Public Health Service.
Washington, D. C.In re: Cushing Refining & Gasoline Co.
Docket 2825

Sir:

Reference is made to Public Health Bulletin No. 163 pertaining to the use of tetraethyl gasoline in its relation to public health and the report of a committee of seven recognized authorities, appointed by the Surgeon General of the United States Public Health Service, as to the health hazards involved in the retail distribution and general use of tetraethyl lead gasoline motor fuel, prepared by:

W. H. Howell
A. J. Chesley
David L. Edsall
Reid Hunt
W. S. Leathers -
Julius Stieglitz
C. E. A. Winslow.

This Committee reported, as shown by page 110 of the bulletin cited above, that in their opinion there are at present no good grounds for prohibiting the use of ethyl gasoline, which is the principal issue in the above entitled proceeding.

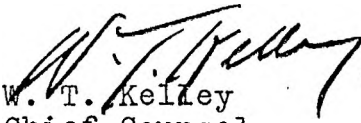
R. W. G.

Page 2

June 9, 1936

It is accordingly asked that you be kind enough to let me have the present address of each member of this committee, insofar as the same may be known at this time, together with a statement as to whether or not any of them are in the Government service

Very truly yours,


W. T. Kelley
Chief Counsel

0875-96-202 General

June 12, 1936.

Mr. W.T. Kelley,
 Chief Counsel,
 Federal Trade Commission,
 Washington, D.C.

Dear Sir:

Receipt is acknowledged of your letter of June 9, referring to Public Health Bulletin No. 163 containing the report of the committee regarding the use of tetraethyl lead gasoline motorfuel, and requesting the address of each member of the committee and a statement as to whether any of them are in the Government service.

I am enclosing a list of the seven members of the committee and their present addresses. The first five members on the list are at present consultants of the Public Health Service. All of the committee members named held appointments with the Service as consultants at the time of their study of the tetraethyl lead problem and their report to the Surgeon General.

Very truly yours,

Olson
 Acting Surgeon General

EE:LCM

44-11128

Committee appointed by the Surgeon General of the U. S. Public Health Service to present a statement as to the health hazard involved in the retail distribution and general use of tetra-ethyl lead gasoline motor fuel.

Dr. W. H. Howell, Department of Pathology, Johns Hopkins Hospital, Baltimore, Md.

Dr. A. J. Chasley, Executive Health Officer, State Department of Health, St. Paul, Minnesota.

Dr. David L. Blissell, Harvard Medical School, Boston, Mass.

Dr. Reid Hunt, Professor of Pharmacology, Harvard Medical School, Boston, Mass.

Dr. Waller S. Leathers, Professor of Preventive Medicine, Vanderbilt University, Nashville, Tenn.

Dr. Julius Stieglitz, Professor of Chemistry, University of Chicago, Chicago, Ill.

Dr. C.-E. A. Winslow, Professor of Public Health, Yale University, New Haven, Conn.

11-12-36
New York, Sept. 17, 1936

September 21, 1936

Mr. John L. Spivak,
31 East 27th Street,
New York, N. Y.

My dear Mr. Spivak: I have just received your letter of the 14th inst. regarding the report on methanol.

I am somewhat surprised that you are "bewildered" by what you refer to as "a strange coincidence." After looking into the methanol matter, I could find no better and no more accurate statements than those which were contained in the preliminary report on methanol to which you refer.

In other words, I subscribe fully to the conclusions reached by the investigators who prepared this report. As I told you when you were in my office, if your own investigations lead you to conclude that the statements made in this report are erroneous, I earnestly request that you bring such facts to my attention.

Sincerely yours,

(Sgd) Thomas Parran

Surgeon General

Mr. John L. Spivak,
31 East 27th Street,
New York, N. Y.

TP:MTL

EX-13 11-10-36

Gen'l Files
10/2/36

31 East 27th Street,
New York, Sept. 17, 1936

The Surgeon General,
U.S. Public Health Service,
Washington, D.C.

My dear General Parran:

Thanks ever so much for your letter of September 14th and the lengthy statement you were kind enough to write for me on methanol.

I am a little bewildered by your assurances that you "have looked into this matter at some length....and I have written it with a view to making the facts clear to readers of your newspaper...." I am afraid my readers may find it difficult to understand for the statement you wrote for me is, word for word, taken from the preliminary report on methanol prepared by Dr. R.R. Sayres and W.P. Yant and submitted for approval to the Du Pont Amonia Co., the Carbide & Carbon Chemical Corporation and the Commercial Solvents Corporation in 1930. This is the very statement that the Du Pont firm edited so carefully, requesting that certain portions be deleted and suggesting that certain phrases be substituted for some of those in the original draft submitted to them. The suggested phrases by the Du Ponts were incorporated verbatim and are included in the statement you sent me.

I feel confident, after my talk with you in Washington, that you can straighten me and my readers out on this rather "strange coincidence" as The New Yorker would call it.

Sincerely yours,

John L. Spink

RRB

EX-101

Gen'l Files
10/2/36
MMA

P. 8
10/2/36

OFFICE OF
INDUSTRIAL HYGIENE
AND SANITATION

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
UNITED STATES
PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE

WASHINGTON, D. C.
September 14, 1936

September 12, 1936.

Mr. John L. Spivak,
31 East 27th Street,
New York, N. Y.

Dear Mr. Spivak: General,

U. S. Public Health Service,
Wash. D. C.
This is in further reference to our conversation of last week at which time I promised to send to you today a statement concerning methanol (rough Division of Scientific Research)

I have looked into this matter at some length, since you were here and have assembled available information. It is likely that my statement goes into too much detail for your purpose, but I have written it with a view to making the facts clear to the readers of your newspaper, most of whom do not have as much knowledge concerning this matter as you do.

York City.

You made some reference to the fact that the final report of the Bureau of Mines had not yet been published. I have taken this matter up with the Bureau of Mines and find that the manuscript will be published by the end of the present calendar year.

You called my attention to the fact that the studies made by Doctor Sayers at the Bureau of Mines were financed by the manufacturers of methanol. This is a regular procedure in the Department of Commerce and I am sure that insofar as relates to the studies carried out by Doctor Sayers and other members of my staff, the source of the funds for the research did not influence the findings. This was a definite understanding at the time the study was undertaken.

Since talking with you I have refreshed my memory also concerning the publications of certain investigators who have reached conclusions different from those of Doctor Sayers. With the knowledge now available, I believe there would be very little, if any, difference of opinion at the present time between any reputable investigators and members of the Public Health Service who have been intimately concerned with this problem.

I appreciated very much the opportunity of discussing this matter with you. If in the course of your inquiries you find convincing evidence of methanol poisoning, under conditions as that material is being used in industry, I hope you will bring them promptly to my attention, and I can assure you of a careful and thorough investigation.

Sincerely yours,
(Sgd) Thomas Parran

Surgeon General

TP:AMM

Handwritten:
Sent files
AMM
10/2/36

TREASURY DEPARTMENT

OFFICE OF
INDUSTRIAL HYGIENE
AND SANITATION

UNITED STATES
PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE

WASHINGTON, D. C.

September 12, 1936.

The Surgeon General,
U. S. Public Health Service,
Washington, D. C.

Sir: (Through Division of Scientific Research)

I have the honor to transmit herewith a statement concerning the toxic effects of methanol which you asked to be prepared for Mr. John L. Spivak, 31 East 27th Street, New York City.

Respectfully,

R. R. Sayers
R. R. Sayers,
Medical Officer in Charge.

Gen'l (Sayers)
10/2/36

METHANOL

Methanol is neither a new nor an uncommon chemical compound. It has been marketed under many different chemical and trade names, some of which are methyl alcohol, wood alcohol, wood spirit, methyl hydrate, wood naphtha, Columbia Spirits and Colonial Spirits. Millions of gallons have been used by millions of people during the past thirty years, principally for solvent purposes, for the manufacture of formaldehyde, and for denaturing ethyl alcohol. In 1930 methanol became available in large quantities and at a markedly lower cost than heretofore. This was not due to the expansion or development in the wood distillation industry, but to the development of a synthetic process for making the product. The new process was originally conceived and developed in France and Germany, primarily from the viewpoint of increasing uses of coal and gas and with the particular viewpoint of the developments of future liquid motor fuels. The process readily found adoption in the United States for the utilization of heretofore waste gases in the manufacture of industrial chemicals, resulting in the production of methanol at a markedly reduced cost.

TOXICITY OF METHANOL

The observations and discussions of the poisonous effect of methanol which have been recorded in the literature are in many cases conflicting and confusing. Some have explained the differences

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Paul F. L. *ammy*
10/2/36

in results on the basis of individual susceptibility. While this explanation is no doubt valid in part, it is also just as possible that many of the differences arise through the difficulty in obtaining accurate quantitative details, particularly if it involves the possible use of methanol for beverage purposes. In surveying past experience, however, there are certain consistent observations.

It has been shown beyond doubt that methanol is a poison and will produce serious poisoning when sufficient amounts are taken into the body. Also, there is no practical difference between the toxicity of crude and refined methanol or between methanol made by the wood distillation process and that made by the recent synthetic process. Further, it cannot be made nonpoisonous by any known method or process. These facts need emphasis because some persons have held the erroneous opinion that the poisonous action of methanol is due mainly to impurities and that the purified product is relatively less toxic.

The quantity of methanol required to produce poisoning when the product is taken into the stomach is pretty well known. Small amounts have been taken without apparent harm, but on the average one or two ounces (the contents of one to two ordinary whiskey glasses) will cause serious poisoning with the possibility of blindness and death, and twice that amount will frequently cause death.

The effects of inhaling air containing various amounts of methanol vapor are not so well known. Wide experience over many

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years has shown that there are conditions of exposure to methanol vapor in the air which cause no apparent harm and also that there are conditions which will produce serious poisoning. Records of cases of severe poisoning by inhaling methanol vapor, however, show the large majority of serious cases to have occurred in the use of methanol principally as a solvent for paints and varnishes in relatively small confined and unventilated places. The use of shellac dissolved in methanol for coating the interior of beer vats has been an important source of trouble of this kind. The potential health hazards from air containing methanol vapor thus depend on the degree of exposure.

Less is known of the dangers to health from absorption of methanol through the skin. A review of the literature gives no conclusive information that serious poisoning has been acquired in this manner. A few cases are described as possibly being due to skin absorption. In these cases the exposure was either so slight that it is rather hard to believe that the trouble was due to absorption of methanol through the skin, or the situation was so complicated by the possibility of high concentrations of vapor in the air breathed. When one considers the large amounts of methanol that have been used and the frequency with which it has undoubtedly come in contact with the skin, in many instances having been used for treatment of wounds and for "rubbing" purposes, it is

produced by the rapid evaporation. A number of persons stated that they had used methanol on wounds and as a liniment for rubbing purposes.

None of these men expressed fear of exposure to the vapors or by skin contact, for the reason that they had never experienced ill health from it, nor did they know of serious effects having occurred to workers in the industry from this manner of exposure. There is, on the other hand, universal knowledge that methanol is poisonous and cannot be taken into the stomach. The results of the physical examination of these men revealed no acute or chronic illnesses and no defective vision or eye pathology attributable to methanol. There was also no indication of deleterious action revealed by blood and urine analysis. In a considerable number of cases of comparatively severe exposure, methanol was found in both the blood and urine when the specimens were taken after several hours' work. This confirms actual exposure and acquiring methanol, but, on the other hand, substantiates experience that certain amounts of methanol can be acquired without apparent harm. Specimens taken the following morning from several of these persons showed methanol to be practically absent in most cases, and markedly reduced in the others. In all cases the amounts in the blood and urine were far below those which had been found in the laboratory part of the study to be harmful to dogs.

It was concluded that the evidence that methanol poisoning has been caused by absorption through the skin is rare and inconclusive. Also that practically continuous exposure to low concentrations and

short intermittent exposure to high concentrations of methanol caused no apparent harm; but, on the other hand, continued exposure to high concentrations will cause serious poisoning.

All methanol, whether made by wood distillation methods or synthetic methods or whether it is crude, refined or highly purified, is poisonous when taken internally. It will cause serious poisoning, blindness or possibly death, when as little as two ounces is taken into the stomach. The greatest danger is that someone might drink methanol, in view of its other names, wood alcohol and methyl alcohol.

On behalf of the state and territorial health officers, the Public Health Service has been instrumental in bringing about agreements with the chemical industry beneficial to the health of those working in the industry and also to those using its products. The agreements cover such poisonous materials as tetraethyl lead, methanol, liquid chlorinated hydrocarbons, carbon tetrachloride, carbon disulphide, and anilin oil. A copy of the Agreement by the United States Public Health Service with the Manufacturers of Methanol, Methyl Alcohol, or Wood Alcohol, is attached hereto. So far as is known to the Public Health Service this agreement has formed a satisfactory basis for the protection of users and handlers of Methanol.

apparent that no appreciable hazard exists from this manner of exposure to methanol when it is used in automobile radiators as antifreeze.

A survey of the conditions of exposure prevailing in four plants engaged in the manufacture of methanol and physical examinations of the limited number of men who were exposed from a period of a few months to ten to fifteen years has been completed. This survey consisted in making general observations of duties and exposure of the workmen, quantitative chemical determinations of the amount of methanol to which the workmen were exposed and a physical examination of the workmen. The physical examination included an occupational history, a health history and a complete physical examination with special attention to vision, pupil reflex and eye pathology as revealed by ophthalmoscopic examination. Urine specimens were examined for albumen, sugar, specific gravity, reaction to litmus and methanol content; and blood specimens for methanol, hemoglobin content, number of red and white cells and differential cell counts.

These persons were engaged in all the operations of manufacturing methanol wherein there was exposure to air containing the vapor and exposure by contact with the skin. In nearly all cases both types of exposure were present. The manner of exposure to vapor ranged from working over drums being filled with methanol, inserting bungs in filled drums the exterior of which was usually wet with drippings,

working over an open drain pan continuously wet with methanol, taking samples of methanol from drums and still-house lock-boxes, making hydrometer tests and general exposure resulting from leaks and spillage in the working places.

Contact with the skin was a common finding, occurring many times daily with some persons. In one operation a man wet the palm and fingers of one hand two hundred to three hundred times daily, and in addition to this, was continuously working over drums being filled with antifreeze methanol. In a similar operation another person wore gloves, the palms and fingers of which were wet almost constantly. Other operations required almost constant contact of the fingers with methanol. It is a rather common practice among still-house operations at wood distillation plants to wet their hands with methanol and smell the product as a guide in still operation. Likewise, it is a common practice at these plants to use methanol for washing wood tar from the hands and tools and for cleaning parts of machinery.

The above are usual and observed exposures. Under unusual conditions, it was learned by interview of workmen, that some frequently got their trouser legs wet and others, on a number of cases, have been practically drenched with methanol. They stated that the unusual procedure in these cases is to merely allow the methanol to evaporate as they suffer no discomfort other than the cooling effect

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