

Lead Industries Association

420 LEXINGTON AVENUE

NEW YORK 17, N. Y.

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SECRETARY-TREASURER

MANFRED BOWDITCH
DIRECTOR OF HEALTH AND SAFETY

February 15, 1956

Robert A. Kehoe, M.D., Director
Kettering Laboratory
University of Cincinnati
Eden Avenue
Cincinnati 19, Ohio

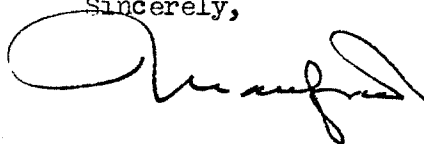
Dear Bob:

You may remember that, in response to my request, you were kind enough to write me on June 24th of last year a letter which I was able to use in behalf of one of our Australian member companies, The Broken Hill Associated Smelters Proprietary Limited.

It has taken some time to secure from them a statement with regard to the legislative troubles with which they were and are beset, but this has now come in the letter of which a copy is herewith, sent with the thought that you may find it of some interest.

The "Act" referred to in Mr. Love's paragraph numbered six is by all odds the most stringent piece of anti-lead-paint legislation ever to come to my attention. Let me know if you care to see it.

Sincerely,



MB:GW

Enclosure



KE 0014906

THE BROOKHILL ASSOCIATED INDUSTRIES PROPRIETARY LTD LTD

Collins House, Melbourne, C. 1

Airmail:

27th January, 1956.

The Secretary,
Lead Industries Association,
120 Lexington Avenue,
NEW YORK 17, N.Y.

Dear Sir,

We refer to correspondence exchanged with you, and particularly to Mr. Powditch's letter of the 29th ultimo, on the attitude of the Australian Federation of Organisations of the Blind towards the use of paints containing lead.

2. We regret that we did not let you know the final outcome but the Federation took no further action and we judged it best to "let sleeping dogs lie."

3. Had the Federation gone ahead the information and opinions which you sent us would have been most useful. We have been glad to have this information on hand in case of need.

4. It may be of interest if we set out brief notes on the attitude of the authorities in this country towards the use of lead in general and paints in particular.

5. Regulations relating to the health of lead workers in the State of Victoria are already known to you having been sent to you with our letter 9373 of the 14th December, 1953.

6. Mr. Foulger, in his letter dated 3rd June, 1955, enclosed with Mr. Powditch's letter dated 14th June, refers to reports from Queensland. The Queensland Department handling health and medical services has followed this matter up very strongly and recently the Queensland Legislature passed a law entitled "The Health Acts Amendment Act of 1955" which amounts to a total prohibition on the use of paints containing lead. In this case the question of blindness, so far as we know, did not arise. A copy of this Act is enclosed in case you would like to see it.

7. This proposed Legislation, whilst still under consideration, was discussed at length with the Queensland authorities but they proved quite adamant and would not consider any modification.

8. As Mr. Foulger has noted, the conditions in Queensland do not exist in the other Australian States and it seems unlikely that such drastic legislation will be introduced elsewhere.

9. The Victorian authorities contemplate legislation of which the effect may be summarised as follows:

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1. Regulations will be promulgated in the near future under the Poisons Act, and will probably be operative as from 1st July, 1956. By that date it is expected that all manufacturers will be able to clear their own stocks of paint not complying with the Regulations.
2. All pigmented architectural paint sold for domestic use, the pigment of which contains more than 1% of soluble lead calculated as PbO, as determined by the specified method (copy of which is attached hereto) are to bear the following statement:-

CONTAINS LEAD

Must not be used on roofs used for water collection
or on articles used by children.

The words "CONTAINS LEAD" must be in a type size not smaller than that of the name of the colour appearing on the tin. The remainder of the declaration may be in smaller type, provided it is large enough to be clearly legible.

The above statement must be placed in a conspicuous position on the tin, preferably on the lid. Its inclusion with the "Directions for use" will not be permitted.

3. The term "Paint" as used above, which refers to paint sold for domestic use, is to be interpreted in the broadest sense and, without limiting the ordinary meaning, includes any substances of any kind whatsoever used, or intended to be used, for application as a colouring or protective coating to any surface. The term includes oil paint, water paint, emulsion paint, enamel, nitrocellulose lacquer and distemper, but obviously does not include unpigmented finishes such as Varnishes or clear nitrocellulose lacquer.
4. Members of the Industry are relieved from any obligations to refrain from advertising the fact that some or all of their products conform to the Regulations.

Our advice is that this seems reasonable under all the circumstances and that no good purpose would be served by trying to oppose it. It seems to be generally agreed that lead containing paints should not be used for articles of furniture with which infants and young children may come in contact. This is indeed mentioned by Mr. Greenburg in his letter dated the 15th June, 1955, to Mr. Newditch.

10. As far as white lead paints are concerned use in this country seems to be disappearing and consequently it might not be worthwhile to devote too much time or trouble to combat legislation against the use of a material which may disappear in any case before so very long. We naturally deplore the declining use of white lead paints but there is no point in refusing to face facts. The use of lead for colours and for undercoats seems firmly established and likely to continue. We would be interested to have any views you may care to express on the probable future of white lead paint for finishing coats.

11. May we say again that we very much appreciate the co-operation we have had from you and in the event of any further difficulty here we shall be only too glad to avail ourselves of your kind assistance once again.

Yours faithfully,

S. Love

for

Brian Taylor
Secretary.

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