

January 26, 1939

Mr. J.C. Taylor
Ethyl Gasoline Corporation
Chrysler Building
New York, New York

Attention: Mr. O.B. Lewis

Dear Mr. Lewis:

I am sending you under separate cover today the safety manual which I borrowed from you.

Have gone over our observations on the proportioneer with Mr. Kehoe, who has asked me to pass a long to you some considerations as to use of this equipment. You are already familiar with the details of design and construction and the necessity of dealing with the hazard of the moving valve in the Ethyl fluid line. Assuming that these details can be corrected and worked out by proper engineering, there would seem to be no objection to the installation of an experimental unit from the point of view of hazard. Such a unit could be constructed in connection with the bulk plant and could be kept under observation and study for a period of time of at least one year.

However, before going even so far as the step suggested above, it would be well to look further to see if there is not some other practical solution of their circulating and mixing difficulties other than an alteration in present mixing procedures. Present methods of mixing have a history of some fifteen years of use without the occurrence of illness or danger to men engaged in blending, and any change in equipment or procedure must therefore be assuredly proven safe and offer distinct advantages over the methods now in use. I think Mr. Shepard should appreciate that point. It is not a matter of the Ethyl Gasoline Corporation being arbitrary about equipment design and use, but rather it is a proper reluctance to alter tried and satisfactory procedures where the consequences of breakdown or unforeseen accident may be serious. It would further follow that even in the event of the test equipment having proven satisfactory over a period of time any subsequent installations would be subject to approval by the Medical Department after consideration of the situation and uses in each instance.

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If, after being acquainted with our point of view, Mr. Shepard wishes to proceed with the adaptation of the proportioneer to his new bulk installation, we will be happy to cooperate with him both in respect to design of the equipment as well as by keeping the installation under observation for a period of time.

Between ourselves, I believe that you should make every effort to discourage the idea. This device looks to me to be too well suited to tank car blending, and while it is not the present intention to use it in such fashion, since there is little as 1000 gallons of gasoline can be accurately blended with the device, it would seem inevitably to lead in that direction. This will be apparent to refiners, and it may well be that there will be a tendency to smaller and smaller types of equipment which would be sufficiently sensitive to record accurately the weights of fluid which would enter into tank car blending, the consequences of which are apparent. It appeared during our meeting in Providence that the principal reason for urging this type of equipment was that the losses in blending and circulation were unusually high. With a change over to bulk equipment, which is impending, perhaps some other way may be found of meeting that difficulty.

Very truly yours,

WM:mw

Willard Machle, M.D.

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