

INCORPORATED

ASHLAND, KENTUCKY

November 6, 1931

Dear Sir: Re: [REDACTED] Vs: Ashland Refining Co. -
[REDACTED] Lead Poisoning.

Very truly yours,

C. A. Riley, Insurance Department.

KE 0017009

MEMORANDUM

(From Howard Van Antwerp, Jr.)

In the case of [REDACTED] vs Ashland Refining Company he claims disability due to inhaling vapors of tetra ethyl lead.

1. Does he have any present physical disability, temporary or permanent?

2. Could this be ascribed to anything in connection with his employment?

3. Does he have any of the well known symptoms of lead poisoning?

4. He makes no complaint at present of spilling ethyl liquid on him at any time, though he may do this later.

5. He claims to have absorbed poisonous tetra ethyl lead vapor which accumulated in an unventilated wash-house adjoining the treating plant and also while holding the hatch cover open in a gauging tank in which gasoline and ethyl lead were being mixed.

Lead poisoning seems universally to be considered an occupational disease. The lead enters the system mainly if not entirely by absorption through the respiratory and gastro-intestinal tract. The most rapid is inhalation through the respiratory tract of finely divided particles; Next comes continued ingestion of lead compounds. Nearly all authorities agree that intact skin is practically negligible as a portal of entry for inorganic compounds. The general opinion is there is some danger of cutaneous absorption in the handling of organic lead compounds such as tetra ethyl lead. But [REDACTED] at present makes no complaint of absorbing this by direct contact, he only claim he inhaled vapors.

The Kentucky Compensation Law does not cover nor include occupational diseases but does include "injuries or death due to the inhalation of any kind of gas". The only way that Conley can make out a case is to prove that tetra ethyl lead when exposed to air produces a poisonous gas which is disabling when inhaled. The question first, is such a poisonous vapor so produced? Second, would its inhalation produce any physical effects?

The usual experience with the inhalation of poisonous gases is that the results are fatal in gases of sufficient concentration. If not fatal temporary disability up to a week or ten days is usual and the patient returns to work without further ill effects.

We should have all the technical information that the Ethyl Gasoline Corporation will give us as well as the experience of other men at the plant engaged in the same work as Conley in the same places.

KE 0017010