



Department of Energy
Bonneville Power Administration
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In reply refer to: ER

January 23, 1980

Dr. R. A. Kehoe
Highland Towers, Apartment 1504
1071 Celestial Street
Cincinnati, Ohio 45202

Dear Dr. Kehoe:

It was a most pleasant surprise to speak directly with you after hearing of you, reading your articles, and referring to your papers in talks and publications over many years.

The specific question I have is: Is 0.05 ppm a safe level for lead in water used for drinking? Would the same conclusion be drawn under "worse situation" conditions such as using it for nursing mothers and babies?

I am here at Bonneville Power Administration for two years and have two assignments. One is to initiate an epidemiological study of high voltage workers. The other is to identify occupational exposures to potentially hazardous substances. The above questions relate to the latter although their implications relate to employees' families. I believe one of the motivations for raising the issue was learning that an NAS committee was about to recommend that the MCL for lead in drinking water be lowered to 0.025 ppm, a level which may be difficult to achieve since I learned from the Portland EPA office that samples of some home waters taken from the east and northwest areas of Portland, Oregon, were up to 0.3 and 1.0 ppm. (Such levels, I am guessing, must come from old plumbing such as galvanized pipes. The source of Portland water is the Bull Run reservoir, which EPA says is well below the limit for lead.)

Any comments or advice will be keenly appreciated. I should add that there are no legal, financial, or union relation overtones. The questions are at the personal concern and scientific level, and I hope to keep them there.

Sincerely,

Harry Kornberg

H. A. Kornberg