

May 12, 1948

Dr. C. E. Kurt,
Ethyl Corporation,
P. O. Box 341,
Baton Rouge 1, La.

Dear Kurt:

Please accept my apology for the delay in replying to your letter of April 16. This letter went astray in my hands, having been set aside with some material that did not require answer, and thereby escaped my attention until a day or two before Dr. Beste's wire to me. I shall give you the best information I can, although this may not turn out to be wholly satisfactory.

At the time of the issuance of the recommendations of the United States Public Health Service, following the investigation at their hands, no precise specifications, with reference to color, were issued, since at that time only a red dye was being used by Ethyl Corporation. and since the color was entirely adequate for the purpose of distinguishing "Ethyl Gasoline" from other commercial products. Subsequently a situation arose which required the use of other colors, and as this situation developed, correspondence between the Public Health Service and Graham Edgar resulted in the establishment of certain color intensities. The Corporation made the first move in this direction, and its action was approved and made official, so to speak, by the Public Health Service. I enclose herewith a letter which states the situation, and which covers all the dyes used at the time indicated by the date of the letter. Since that time certain additional situations have arisen in connection with aviation gasoline. To the best of my knowledge these situations are covered in the attached letter of September 24, 1946 and in the attached memo relating to Grade 80 aircraft fuel.

The requirements for purposes of the public health are that the gasoline be colored in such a way as to be distinctive, thereby clearly indicating that it is a special fuel, and thereby implying, for what it is worth, that it is not to be used for any other purpose. When this question has been raised, ^{recently} with reference to any color, samples of the dyed gasoline have been submitted to the Public Health Service, and to anyone else who might be concerned, including myself, and the decision has been arrived at on the basis of the examination of samples as supplied. In general, there has been no question or disagreement concerning the intensity of color required to be "distinctive."

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In general, up to comparatively recent times, the dye concentrations have been arrived at in the manufacturing department of the Corporation, subject to the approval of the Public Health Service. I should suppose that Mr. Schaefer knows all about these matters, but if he does not, it is quite certain that Charlie Wasserman does. In any case, there has been no very elaborate technique used in establishing the specifications with reference to color. I should think that if anyone could develop a complete procedure for the selection of the most appropriate dyes and for establishing specifications as to the use of those dyes, such a procedure could be submitted to the Public Health Service for consideration. At present the general technique in this regard has usually been to supply me with all of the necessary information for presentation to the Public Health Service for their consideration and for conference with them as to their attitude. I am quite sure that anything the industry wants, and anything that will contribute to the convenience of operations, will be approved by the Public Health Service as long as it meets with the general requirements of distinguishing for the purchaser a leaded gasoline from other gasolines. There are, of course, other considerations at present, which have to be taken into account. Certain potentially dangerous products are dyed in certain ways in certain of the states. It is advisable to avoid any confusion in these matters, and therefore every law of this kind or every state regulatory measure, has to be considered. Then also, from the point of view of civil and military aeronautical fuels, it is quite necessary to differentiate between the different grades, and therefore the colors must be distinctive, and the general manufacturing procedure must be uniform. Outside of these considerations, there is nothing I can see that would exclude the application of better technical procedures and better specifications, in the matter of the coloration of gasolines.

As I indicated above, this may or may not be all of the information available on our present methods of dealing with this problem. However, I am sure that anything else, in the way of current procedure can be learned from Schaefer, Wasserman and, if need be, from Graham Edgar. If I am just a little uncertain on these points, it is because this has not been a matter of primary concern to me. Rather it has been handled by the technical and manufacturing people of the Corporation, and I have not kept up with it in minute detail at every step. If there is anything further in this connection that you want me to do or if, subsequently, there are matters to be discussed with the office of the Surgeon General of the Public Health Service, do not hesitate to let me know.

Sincerely yours,

Robert A. Kehoe, M. D.

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C.C.: Mr. J. H. Schaefer

Enc.

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The specifications for grade 80 aircraft engine fuel were changed recently to permit the use of 0.5 ml per gallon. A new color standard was required and accordingly Army-Navy Specification AN-F-48 Grade 80 Aircraft Engine Fuel, if leaded, must contain a minimum of 0.05 mg. blue dye plus 7.5 red dye per U. S. Gallon.

According to a letter from Headquarters Air Materiel Command dated March 15, 1948.

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