

January 8, 1945

Mr. A. D. Aishton,
American Surety Company of N. Y.,
100 Broadway,
New York City 5.

Dear Mr. Aishton:

Your letter of December 27 has raised a question which has been the subject of inquiry and investigation over a period of some months. As you are probably aware, the normal commercial handling of leaded gasoline is not accompanied by any demonstrable hazards from the aspect of lead absorption. On the other hand, under certain conditions of handling which have arisen from the necessities of the war, undue exposure both to gasoline and to lead may occur. Generally speaking, the hazards are not very great under the usual conditions of good plant control. Moreover, the exercise of care in the avoidance of undue risks from fire and explosion tend to bring about automatically a large measure of control of the toxic hazards, even though I should not like to be responsible for the statement that conditions may not occur in which the hazards of lead absorption will be greater than they should be. In fact, I have seen one or two situations which in my opinion require additional measures of hygienic control.

It would be very difficult for me to give you any useful advice, except on the basis of my knowledge of the conditions with which you are concerned. On the other hand, I have had the responsibility of investigating situations of this type either directly or indirectly, and for giving the advice required to bring about safe conditions. I have been attempting to obtain information on the various locations in this country in which work of the kind you mention is being carried out. To some extent each situation has its own peculiar characteristics. It may be that I am familiar with the conditions at the location which you have referred to without identification. In any case, I should appreciate it very much if you would give me such information as you properly can concerning the location of this installation. It will be possible for me to visit it or to have it visited by an experienced safety engineer, and on the basis of the observations made, the plant can be given a clean bill-of-health, or recommendations can be made which will be productive of a situation which need give you no anxiety.

I realize your position as the insurer, and I think everyone, but

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chiefly the workmen, will benefit from the prevention of any difficulties.

Very truly yours,

Robert A. Kehoe, M. D.

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