

October 20, 1938

James McCredie and Son, Inc.
Aurora, Illinois

Dear Sir:-

Some time ago I received through the Ethyl Gasoline Corporation copies of some reports concerning two cases of skin irritation in your employees, one of which was referred to in your letter of September 12th addressed to the Chicago office of the Ethyl Gasoline Corporation.

It seems worth while, even this late, to point out to you that this type of condition is not very unusual among persons who handle gasoline of any and all types. All gasolines are somewhat irritating when applied to the skin. Individuals are quite variable with respect to the degree of injury which they receive from contact with gasoline. It is also true that since various types of vapor phase cracking have been employed, new and somewhat more irritating materials occur in gasoline as compared with the former grades of straight petroleum distillates. Over a period of years in which gasoline containing Ethyl Fluid has been used, we have maintained a sharp lookout for any evidence of difficulty associated with the Ethyl Fluid content of the gasoline. We have found none and we are quite certain both for this reason and from a variety of experimental observations that the small quantity of Ethyl Fluid in commercial gasoline is not a contributing factor to the skin irritation that is seen from time to time.

Despite the above comment, we have been interested in the types of skin damage that have been experienced by men handling gasoline, and for that reason I should be glad if you would let me know what has been the outcome of the condition which you reported in these two men. Generally speaking these dermatoses are not very serious and do not occasion real illness but rather a worrisome type of blemish on the skin. Occasionally, however, such a case does reach serious proportions from the point of view of discomfort and in some instances, general illness. Occasionally, also, it is necessary for the patient to discontinue all exposure to gasoline and to other petroleum products for such a period of time as will enable his skin to recover completely.

Fortunately this latter is quite rare, and it is for this reason that experienced handlers of petroleum products and gasoline do not recognize the irritating properties of gasoline.

Very truly yours,

RAK:is

Robert A. Kehoe, M.D.

cc Mr. Lewis