

# PENNSYLVANIA THRESHERMEN & FARMERS' MUTUAL CASUALTY INSURANCE COMPANY

325-333 S. EIGHTEENTH ST.  
HARRISBURG, PENNSYLVANIA

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HARRISBURG, PA.

March 19, 1947

University of Cincinnati  
Cincinnati 19, Ohio

Attention Dr. Robert A. Kehoe

Re: Claim #148030 - [REDACTED]

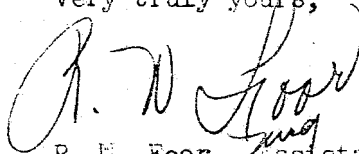
VS  
St. John's Cemetery Co., Inc.

Dear Doctor Kehoe:

This will acknowledge receipt of your letter dated March 13, 1947. We have forwarded a copy to our attorney, Penrose Hertler in order that he may attempt to secure reprints of the articles in the Journal of Industrial Hygiene and Toxicology.

We wish to thank you for the interest you have shown in this matter which is of considerable importance to us.

Very truly yours,



R. W. Foor - Assistant Manager  
Claim Department

RF:MIG

cc: Penrose Hertler, Atty.

*W. Irwin Weidenhammer*

March 13, 1947—

Mr. F. W. Foor,  
Assistant Manager, Claim Department,  
Pennsylvania Threshermen and Farmers' Mutual Casualty  
Insurance Company,  
325 S. Eighteenth Street,  
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.

Dear Mr. Foor:

Your letter of March 1 addressed to Ethyl Corporation concerning W. Irwin Weidenhammer, has been referred to me. In addition I have received copies of the exchange of correspondence between yourself and Mr. T. A. Boyd of General Motors Research Corporation. Inevitably, by virtue of the fact that I and my associates have been following up all cases of this type for the last twenty years, matters of this kind eventually find their way to me. It seems wise, therefore, to make direct contact with you, and also to give you certain items of information which you have not encountered, it appears, up to the present time.

The investigative work on the hygienic problems arising from the distribution and use of leaded gasoline has centered in this Laboratory. The initial investigation of the U. S. Public Health Service and of the Bureau of Mines adduced certain items of information from which the potential hazards of the industry were predicted in some measure. Experimental work of later years together with field investigations of the lead exposure and absorption of groups of men in the various occupations (filling station and refinery personnel, garage mechanics and the like), have served to show that the early prediction was well founded. In other words, it has been demonstrated clearly that lead exposure associated with the ordinary handling of leaded gasoline, and the handling of automobiles and engines is not significantly hazardous. The evidence for all of this is available in the published and unpublished work of this Laboratory, and such information can be provided for the use of your legal people if and when it is required. The problem which would seem to be of principal importance in the present case, is that of the hazards of exposure to exhaust gases. This is the problem of the garage mechanic. The results of the investigation of a large number of garage mechanics who have had the longest exposure of this type, will be found in an article in the Journal of Industrial Hygiene and Toxicology, Volume 18, January 1936. The previous article which discusses this entire subject in considerable detail is to be found in the same journal, Volume 16, March 1934.

Mr. R. W. Foor, - (2; - March 13, 1947

Unfortunately reprints of these articles are not available at the present time, or I would be glad to send you copies. However, I am sure that your attorneys will be able to find files of this journal in any good general library.

There is one additional comment which should be made in relation to this case. It has been demonstrated clearly that the danger of exposure to exhaust gas, over any short period of time (several hours or several days) is that of carbon monoxide poisoning. If an individual is rendered ill as a result of such exposure, his total lead exposure will be quite insignificant. (I am assuming, of course, that the fuel is leaded gasoline) The only possible manner in which one could absorb significant quantities of lead, would be under circumstances in which he was exposed regularly over a long period of time to exhaust gases containing the maximum amount of lead, so diluted as to make it possible for him to survive the risk of carbon monoxide poisoning. No one ever believed at any time that an individual could be poisoned by the inhalation of lead from this source within a few hours. The problem was always that of prolonged exposure to small quantities of lead every day. The work of the Bureau of Mines on this problem demonstrated clearly, that if the exhaust gas was diluted with air to such an extent as to prevent acute carbon monoxide poisoning, then the concentration of lead came to be insignificant in that it was incapable of accumulating in the tissues of exposed animals to any significant degree. This work on animals has been amply confirmed by the practical experience of the past twenty years. Therefore, in terms of the available evidence the claim made in this case is absurd.

I shall be glad to assist you in any other way than by personal testimony in this case.

Very truly yours,

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Robert A. Kehoe, M. D.

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