

Joint History of Exposure

Date 9-18-1932

On September 8th the three patients began cleaning operations on Tank #8 - a 20,000 Bbl storage tank at Hartford Terminal of Standard Oil Company. This tank had been in continuous use for Ethyl gasoline storage for past three years - no other attempts at cleaning during that time. The tank had previously been opened at 4 manhole covers and had aired for 5-6 hours. The tank residue consisted of a sludge of rust and scale 1/2 to 1 inch thick covered by a layer of about 3 inches of water and a thin film of gasoline. The supervisor, [REDACTED] equipped with an air mask then went in and using a flexible hose connected to an outside pump, succeeded in evacuating nearly all of the liquid on the bottom except for small pools accumulated in the depressions in the metal floor. Following this operation, the sludge was scraped up and put into pails which were passed out a lower manhole to the two assistants, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] one of whom handled the pails while the other operated the air pump. After three hours of this work, Bernard alternated on hours shifts with the men outside for the remainder of the day. No symptoms were noted by any of the men this day or night. The following day, Friday, 9-9-32, the work was resumed in the same manner - a man being inside the tank about one hour in three. Friday afternoon [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] worked inside without masks for 1-1/2 to 2 hours at least, while Zebroski was inside working for 4 hours without masks. Gasoline fumes were heavy and nauseating and the air was filled with a fine dust arising mainly from the floor which had dried out except in the deeper indentations - the dust causing repeated paroxysms of sneezing. All of the men left work early because of illness - all complaining of headache, giddiness, nausea and weakness - none ate much dinner, nausea and headache were more marked and vomiting occurred in all three. Tinnitus noted by Zebroski - blurring of vision by [REDACTED]. The three men averaged 1-1/2 to 2 hours restless sleep and were annoyed by the persistent odor of the tank contents. The next day, Saturday, 9-10-32, there was persistence of all symptoms - vomiting was increased in frequency - 10-12 times in case of [REDACTED], there was diarrhea and restlessness appeared. The vomitus was bile stained watery mucous in each case and the diarrhea was of liquid stools of normal color. Seen by Dr. That day and night symptoms increased - sleep being impossible on Saturday night. Sunday 9-11-32 due to the increase in symptoms and marked anxiety of the cases, they were hospitalized. Further course in individual's histories.