

December 28, 1949

Mr. R. D. Morrill,
Claim Department,
The Travelers Insurance Co.,
147 Milk Street,
Boston 9, Massachusetts.

Re: B-6641006

Gulf Oil Corporation
[REDACTED]

Dear Mr. Morrill:

I shall not undertake to reply in detail to your letter of December 8, but merely to acknowledge receipt of your letter and to assure you that I shall be glad to give any assistance I can in considering the problem of the illness of [REDACTED]. Any discussion of the evidence concerning the possibility of hazardous lead exposure, in connection with the handling of leaded gasoline, would be a long story and would be quite unjustified for present purposes. Suffice it at this time to point out that this man's occupation as described cannot be regarded as a potential source of lead poisoning. In the entire history of the use of leaded gasoline there has never been a case of lead poisoning among the tank wagon drivers, filling station attendants and garage mechanics who have some occasion to come in contact with leaded gasoline or its combustion products. The problem has been studied in great detail, and the evidence is available in medical literature. Lead exposure associated with these occupations is of an utterly insignificant type from the hygienic viewpoint. Moreover, the concentration of lead which was to be found in the gasolines handled at various times by this man is entirely irrelevant. Automobile gasolines are not permitted to have more than 3 c.c. of tetraethyl lead per gallon, and at this concentration or even a little higher, the opportunity for lead absorption is negligible, under the ordinary conditions of commercial handling.

From the description of this man's illness, although it is admittedly incomplete, one can see little resemblance to the clinical picture of lead poisoning.

I should suspect that Doctor Aub will be able to arrive at a satisfactory diagnosis, and I suppose that he will look into the question of the evidence of lead absorption, by analytical means. In this connection I should like to point out the advisability, for medico-legal purposes, of having the blood and urine of this man examined, with precision, for their lead content. No doubt Doctor Aub will be able to deal with that problem, but if there should be any question of this, may I suggest the desirability of our having samples of blood and urine for analysis? It is necessary to be very careful to avoid any

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attempt to obtain information of this kind through any other than the most expert channels, since false results, on the high side, would provide a very serious legal hurdle. If you should desire or if Doctor Aub should wish that we carry out such analyses, I should be glad to provide the necessary containers from this Laboratory, together with the appropriate instructions and equipment for taking the samples. In medico-legal cases we do not like to deal with material of this sort except as it is obtained in our equipment and by our instructions.

Incidentally, if it becomes necessary, I can provide you with documentary evidence of the statements made concerning the hazards of this man's occupation.

Very truly yours,

Robert A. Kehoe, M. D.

RAK ef

Dictated but not read.

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