

August 7, 1937

Mr. O. B. Lewis
Ethyl Gasoline Corporation
Chrysler Building
New York City
New York

Dear Mr. Lewis:

I am in receipt of your telegrams of August 6th concerning an alleged case of lead poisoning as diagnosed by Dr. O. M. Weaver, Duval County Hospital of Jacksonville. I do not anticipate that there is anything unusual in this case and I do not believe there is anything to be done until I have heard directly from Dr. Weaver, to whom I am writing today. I shall report whatever there is to report in due course.

So far as possible, it would be much better if these cases were brought directly to my attention rather than through the somewhat circuitous route of the New York office. However I realize that in the nature of the cases, most of them are likely to come through your office.

I have noted the contents of your letter July 27th and the request of Mr. J. H. Brown for information on the handling of gasoline containing tetraethyl lead. I have also noted your letter of August 3rd and the memorandum which you have prepared on the subject of cleaning leaded gasoline storage tanks. I am not kindly disposed toward the dissemination of information through such channels as are represented by Mr. Brown. It is my opinion that such information will be of very little value and that it will not reach the proper people. We are dependent for safety in this field on placing the precise information that is needed in the hands of the persons who are actually responsible for the men who are doing the work. Thus far we have not suffered from any lack of dissemination of information. Rather we suffer from failure to apply the information which is available. Thus I regard all such measures as this as idle gestures. The performance of such gestures in general leads to self deception.

Mr. O. B. Lewis

I should not object to the preparation of an article on the subjects to which you have referred, if I did not consider it a waste of time. Such an article, to be useful at all, would have to be longer and more detailed in its explanation than the one which you have prepared. In any case I am afraid it would result in misunderstanding, particularly in the minds of such jobbers as might see it. I do not fear the dissemination of accurate information on any hazards that may be associated with the business of the Corporation. I only know that even when one writes directly to presumably intelligent people, his comments are often misunderstood, and in this sort of situation where it will be believed that the whole story is not being told, the effects are more likely to be confusing than useful.

Very truly yours,

RAK:is

Robert A. Kehoe, M.D.