

STOURPORT, ENGLAND - REGENT OIL CO.
J. WHELAN AND SONS - ENGINEERS AND
CONTRACTORS - BIRMINGHAM, ENGLAND

KE 0021342

*Answered - See letter 17/10
to make*

THE ASSOCIATED ETHYL COMPANY LIMITED

ARTILLERY HOUSE, ARTILLERY ROW, LONDON, S.W. 1

Telephone: ABBEY 3974

Telegrams: ETHYLPORT, SOWEST, LONDON

OUR REF. ST/3/310

YOUR REF.

12th October, 1950.

Dr. R. A. Kehoe,
University of Cincinnati,
College of Medicine,
Cincinnati, OHIO,
U.S.A.

Dear Bob,

I regret to advise you that we recently had a tank cleaning incident in this country, the first since 1945. This resulted in five cases of Tetraethyl Lead intoxication, but I am glad to say that on this occasion there were no deaths.

Enclosed is a copy of a report prepared by Dr. Davison which I think contains just about all the information that is at present available on this incident.

We are advised that a Branch Engineer of the Regent Oil Company, who operated the tank concerned on behalf of the Air Ministry, contacted the tank cleaning contractors - Messrs. Whelan - prior to the work being started and informed them that the tank had contained leaded gasoline. He also outlined the hazards involved and supplied copies of our Tank Cleaning Regulations.

As usual in such cases the evidence of the men involved is far from clear. It seems, however, that in an effort to complete the job in a short space of time and thereby reduce the cost, corners were cut wherever possible and, in consequence, the men were exposed to a dangerous T.E.L. vapour. During his investigation Dr. Davison discovered that some of the men involved had previously been engaged on a similar job during August and apparently that they observed only minimum precautions in that case also and, therefore, before starting on the job at Stourport were probably exposed to T.E.L. vapour.

It is evident upon reading Dr. Davison's report that the cause of the incident was, as usual, the result of only a partial observance of the regulations for tank cleaning. We are undertaking a further drive not only with the oil companies in this country, but also with the Air Ministry

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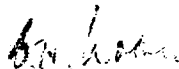
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to point out to them that in spite of the carefully thought out regulations this incident has occurred, in our opinion due to the prescribed regulations not being adhered to, and that constant and informed supervision is absolutely essential to ensure this. If we are to prevent incidents such as these during the current extensive tank cleaning programme which has been initiated in this country at installations similar to the Stourport one, adequate supervision must be provided, and we hope to persuade those concerned to act upon our advice.

When further reports are received from Dr. Davison on the progress of the two men who are at present in hospital we will send them on to you. His latest advice is that Mr. Whelan will be discharged from hospital this week, and Bert Cart in about two weeks' time.

Yours sincerely,



C. H. NOBLE.

Enc.
CHN/bjw

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