

May 27, 1947

Dr. J. G. Townsend, Chief,
Industrial Hygiene Division,
U. S. Public Health Service,
Bethesda, Maryland.

Dear Dr. Townsend:

I am sending to you herewith an open letter addressed to Dr. Parran, which you may or may not wish to transmit to him in its present form. I leave it entirely to your judgment as to whether the matter should be brought up in this fashion, or whether it should be directed through other channels.

The question involved in this letter is one of which I have been aware for some time, but about which during the period of the war and since, Ethyl Corporation has simply had to do the best it could. Some weeks ago representatives of Ethyl Corporation brought the matter to my further attention, pointing out that after all of this period of time since the end of the war, Ethyl Corporation might be suspected of acting in bad faith, unless the matter were brought to the attention of the Public Health Service in whatever way Ethyl Corporation felt might be appropriate. I indicated that I would be willing to act as the go-between for an informal exchange of opinion, but that I thought that perhaps it might be just as well that a formal letter be written to the Surgeon General which then I would convey through your office.

For your further information I am enclosing a copy of Mr. Jones' memorandum to me which merely shows the sequence of events for your information.

The present intention of Ethyl Corporation is to limit the use of the paper sign, if these are approved, to certain areas in which the weather conditions will be most favorable to their lasting for some time, but in which also efforts can subsequently be concentrated with least difficulty, so as to substitute the approved permanent sign for the temporary one. The suggestion as to the use of paper is mine, actually, since in my feeling it was better not to have a temporary sign that would last too long. If a material of semi-permanent character were to be used, it might come to be regarded as satisfactory, thereby giving rise to the feeling that it need not be replaced.

I shall appreciate very much your letting me know your reaction to this problem. Obviously I shall be glad to follow your suggestions and to be helpful in any way I can.

Sincerely yours,

Robert A. Kehoe, M. D.