

September 13, 1971

Mr. William E. Shoemaker, Chairman
Refresher Courses Committee, A.I.H.A.
American Mutual Insurance Company
780 Lancaster Avenue
Bryn Mawr, Penna. 19010

Dear Shoemaker:

I regret that I was unable to comply with your request to reply to your letter of August 11 by September first. I was in Montana at the time, in a Wilderness Area, and I did not return home until a few days ago. My secretary, knowing that I had had a period of unusually hard work (because of an article which I had promised to complete in July) and was tired, shielded me from interruption of my holiday and held my mail (except for certain emergencies) until I returned home. This was extremely good of her, but a bit hard on some of my friends.

However, I hasten now to reply and to assure you that I expect to be prepared to give my course in San Francisco on the date indicated in your letter.

I think I should say that my efforts of last year were not all that they should have been. I was overtaken on the day before the session by a viral illness which took all of the zip out of me, and my memory of the occasion is that of a sort of automatic but not very vigorous response to the appearance on the screen of a series of slides which (I hope) spoke largely for themselves. I should hope to better this performance in 1972, for the slides do not, at their best, speak clearly of what they have to say. Much information has been added to the subject of heavy metal poisoning, especially to the elucidation of some of the nuances in the behavior of lead and mercury, during the past few years, and it is indeed important to industrial hygienists to know where we are in these matters, at present. We are among the group of people who must do much of the working and thinking for the people of this country in the matter of the occupational and environmental problems which are presenting themselves so urgently at present. The new role being played, and to be played hereafter, by the Government of the United States, especially in Occupational Health, while encouraging for the future, presents certain serious difficulties, (due largely to inexperience and - not to be nasty, but only realistic - ignorance of the responsible personnel). We must be ready and willing to contribute as much as we can to the knowledge which is required to protect the industrial employees of our time effectively. This means that every effort must be made to inform our own people thoroughly.

Sincerely yours,

Robert A. Kehoe, M.D.
Professor Emeritus of
Occupational Medicine

RAK:wb

cc: Mr. E. Lynn Schall, Managing Director