

March 30, 1946

WILLIAM H. MOHAM - (C) - Vol. 1, A. M. 10

Mr. M. A. Taylor,
Ethyl Corporation,
123 South Broad,
Philadelphia 9, Penna.

Dear Mr. Taylor:

McCooley's letter to you of March 14 concerning the possible contamination of Still #15 in Gulf Oil Refinery at Grrard Point, Pennsylvania, has raised a question which I think can be answered in terms of the analytical information on samples of sludge obtained from this still some time ago. For this reason it seems wise to report these results to you and to point out their significance as far as it is possible to do so.

Sludge was obtained from this still at two points, one from the bottom of V Tower, and the other from the trays of A Tower. In the case of the first sample there was a very minute amount of tetraethyl lead, actually 0.0001% in the sludge, with slightly larger quantities of intermediate decomposition products of tetraethyl lead, and with 1.35% of inorganic lead. Quite clearly from these results almost all of the lead in this sample was inorganic in character, and therefore was not a source of volatile lead compounds. It scarcely seems possible to me that there would be any appreciable hazard of any kind in the handling of this sludge by ordinary means.

In the case of the second sample there was no tetraethyl lead and only a very small percentage of decomposition products of tetraethyl lead, and only about 1/2 of 1% of inorganic lead. I think we can take it that the lead contamination of this sample is quite insignificant.

On the whole it is my considered opinion that if the still is dealt with as it was before, after rerunning the present gasoline, there will be no hazardous situation that will require further precautionary measures.

I do not presume to know all of the circumstances connected with rerunning operations, since these might vary with the type of still and with other circumstances. For this reason I should not consider the information obtained in this one instance as applying generally to situations of this type. On the other hand, if no hazard was created in running the previous stock of gasoline with its relatively high lead concentration, it would certainly seem unreasonable to expect that the present gasoline with its very low lead concentration could produce a more serious situation.

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I should be glad if you would communicate this opinion to Mr. McCoolley with any further suggestions you may have for his guidance.

Cordially yours,

Robert A. Kehoe, M. D.

RAK ef

C.C.: Mr. O. B. Lewis

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