

Copy to Mr. John Schaefer

March 15, 1934

Mr. J. C. Taylor
Ethyl Gasoline Corporation
Chrysler Building
New York City
New York

Attention: Mr. E. M. Walter

Dear Mr. Walter:

I have gone over the copy of the letter dated March 1st from Mr. Schaefer attaching recommendations made by the Tetraethyl Lead Area Committee on the handling of tank cars which have been returned with gasoline residue. I wish to report my own point of view concerning this problem.

There may be some other way of washing out the tank cars and the delivery lines but after giving the matter some considerable thought, I do not visualize any other simple means of accomplishing the purpose which we had in mind. It is quite clear to me that the lines which carry Fluid from the tank car to the Fluid storage tank at the mixing plants must be washed out and must be kept substantially free from Fluid. The hazard here involves not only a few people in a localized area, but a considerable number of people in all parts of the United States and Canada. The safety of these men because of their lack of facilities for handling poisonous compounds must be considered of paramount importance. The problem of safety at the Manufacturing Plant is not less important, but is much more readily handled almost without regard to the character of the hazard involved since at the Manufacturing plant it is possible to provide facilities for the adequate care of almost any type of danger. This, in my opinion, is the responsibility which, under the circumstances, the Manufacturing Plant must be prepared to assume. It is by no means proper, therefore, for the Manufacturing Plant to adopt the point of view that it can push back into another field and to another group of people, the dangers which are an inseparable part of its activity.

As to the dangers of handling gasoline at the Manufacturing Plant, I am not in position to speak with authority. It is quite clear, however, that gasoline can be handled with a reasonable safety. The current methods of refinery practice are rather clearly fairly adequate for handling this type of problem. I have very little doubt,

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Mr. E. H. Walter

therefore, that the technical skill of the DuPont organization is adequate for the solution of this problem, and I think it should adopt the point of view that it is an obstacle to be surmounted.

You will note that I have not even mentioned points (2) and (3) which Mr. Schaefer presented as our reasons for requiring the flushing out of the tank cars with gasoline. These may be important points, and point (3) rather obviously has to do with a problem of eventual safety. However, I am thinking primarily of the immediate danger of handling the Ethyl Fluid from the tank car to the storage tank, and of handling and opening lines which have carried concentrated Ethyl Fluid without previous cleansing. I do not see how we can get around the necessity of using gasoline for this purpose. I believe kerosene could be used, but I dare say the gasoline manufacturers would scarcely be willing to introduce such amounts of kerosene into their gasoline.

I have probably conveyed the idea that what I consider of primary importance is the adequate washing out of the Fluid lines. Any means that can be devised for doing this satisfactorily, will probably meet with my approval. However I do not see how I can do less than insist that this be properly done in some manner.

Very truly yours,

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Robert A. Kehoe, M.D.

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