

April 27, 1946

Dr. Paul A. Neal,  
U. S. Public Health Service,  
Bethesda, Maryland.

Dear Paul:

Pursuant to our telephone conversation of this morning I am calling to your attention in writing a matter which may well be of some significance in that it involves the good faith of Ethyl Corporation as well as the distributors of leaded gasoline, with reference to the appropriate use of a sign on dispensing pumps for gasoline, that will draw the attention of the gasoline purchaser to the implied warning expressed in the type of sign used hitherto for this purpose. As you are probably aware, there have been numerous questions from time to time as to the means by which this could best be done, in view of the changes in dispensing equipment which have come into use at various times. The types of pumps that are used at gasoline filling stations have gone through a series of changes, and it now happens that the design of these pumps is such that the specific recommendations of the Surgeon General cannot be followed. I am getting together some information, and I hope also, some pictures or cuts of pumps that are now in existence or proposed for use, which will illustrate the difficulty. When I am able to get these together I should be glad to present them to you. Certainly the purposes of the original recommendations have been and still are quite clear. It remains to decide how those purposes can best be achieved. I am assured by the executives of Ethyl Corporation that both they and their customers have every wish to comply with the recommendations of the Surgeon General. Moreover they are somewhat hesitant in proceeding on the basis of their own judgment as to the best means of accomplishing the purposes of the recommendations, since to do so might subject them to the criticism that they were interpreting the recommendations purely in accordance with their own wishes and convenience. Accordingly it seems desirable to give some consideration to the matter of the establishment of the principles upon which appropriate action can be taken.

I should like very much to bring all the information that I have on this subject to your attention at an early date. It so happens that I shall be in Wilmington, Delaware on the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd of May. I could be in Washington on either the 3rd or 4th, although from my point of view if it is at all possible, the 4th would be the most advantageous time. I shall be at the du Pont Hotel, and if you will let me know whether either of these dates is satisfactory, I shall be glad to be in Washington to meet with you when and where you may designate. I shall try to have with me the information which will present the difficulties which it seems necessary to meet.

Sincerely yours,

Robert A. Kehoe, M. D.

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