

June 15, 1943

Mr. George Calingaert,
Ethyl Corporation,
1700 West Eight Mile Road,
Detroit, Michigan.

Dear Cal:

A few days ago I was asked a direct question in connection with the use of tetraethyl lead as an ethylating agent for an arsenic compound, as to the temperature at which appreciable decomposition of tetraethyl lead begins to occur. Not having this information at my finger tips and wishing to be sure that I make no mistake, I should appreciate it if you would let me know. There is one other question which I think you can answer much better than I from greater practical experience. What is the best solution to use for decomposing tetraethyl lead in the small quantities in which it might be found on laboratory glassware, and on the floor of the chemical hood in which one works with tetraethyl lead on a laboratory scale. No doubt the quantities of tetraethyl lead will be small, but in view of the fact that an appreciable quantity might be spilled, I want to be sure that any solution which I recommend will not give rise to too violent reaction and possibly to fire. I believe we have used bromine in carbon tetrachloride in approximately 5% solution. Is this satisfactory for general use in an organic chemical laboratory or is there something better that is generally available? You will probably think it strange that I ask you these questions after so many years of experience, but I like to go to headquarters for information, particularly when I have reason to advise someone outside of our own laboratory.

Sincerely yours,

Robert A. Kehoe, M. D.

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