

April 22, 1963

Mr. Elmer A. Fike
President
Roberts Chemicals, Inc.
Nitro, West Virginia

Dear Mr. Fike:

Your letter of April 19th leads me to remark that both of the problems of which you speak are essentially medical (once their engineering aspects have been dealt with realistically). I believe, therefore, that it would be highly advantageous if I were to pay a visit to your plant, and especially to the responsible people in order (1) to see the situation for myself and (2) to consider the total set of precautionary measures that are being taken. I would suppose, for example, that you have a physician in some relationship with your operations or your personnel, and he should know at first hand the nature of the medical problem. Perhaps this could be dealt with through his visit to this laboratory, and if that would meet your wishes, I shall be glad to have him. If you do not have a physician in some proper capacity, you should have, and it would serve your purposes best if I were to discuss this with you. The point is that we are not in the business - if one may call it that - of selling our services to industry. This is a research laboratory and a training center for physicians and engineers who will enter industry for the purposes of industrial medicine and hygiene. We act in industry to advise, to investigate, and to cultivate good practice in industrial health, in order to know what is going on, and to keep our feet, knowledgeably, in industry. We make charges for our consulting and control services of this type to cover their actual cost, in order that we may not dissipate our funds earmarked for research.

While you are considering this matter of further consultation (Mr. Cholak is a thoroughly competent man in his own field, but he would not claim any familiarity with the medical matters), we need not delay in obtaining the information with respect to the status of your employees. We shall send, when you wish, the containers required to collect samples of urine for analyses for mercury and lead. There is no point, at present, in our obtaining samples of blood. If you will let me know the number of employees who are to be tested in each category (i.e., for mercury and lead), we shall send them along with suitable instructions. I should also write to the person who will be responsible for the collection of the samples, for this is the crucial part of the problem. The

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samples will have to be collected in such a manner as to avoid all possibility of their contamination and this requires attention to detail as to the place, the time, and the manner. It would be best, perhaps, if this were handled by a physician. I need to know something about your facilities - wash room, showers, locker rooms etc., if this is to be handled within the plant.

Mr. Cholak may have told you that we make a charge of \$12.50 per sample analysed, plus shipping costs, this charge entitling you to our provision of the containers, plus the analytical services and a report with an interpretation of the results, and medical advice concerning the disposition of employees, to the extent that the latter is required. (This is one very good reason for the submission of our report to a physician).

I believe this covers the matters in which you are interested, and I shall await your instructions.

Very truly yours,

Robert A. Kehoe, M. D.

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