

HEADQUARTERS  
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9 June 1939

John J Phair, M.D.  
College of Medicine  
Eden and Bethesda  
Cincinnati 19, Ohio

Dear Doctor Phair:

The United States Army, Alaska operates a petroleum pipeline that transports diesel oil, jet fuel, motor gasoline and aviation gasoline from Haines, Alaska to Fairbanks, Alaska, a distance of 586 miles. The system has five tank farms, five pumping stations and two take-off stations. The storage tanks have to be cleaned periodically, and since the gasolines are loaded the workers who clean the tanks are exposed to the hazard of tetraethyl lead poisoning.

Until recently there has been little or no consideration of this hazard from a safety or preventive medicine viewpoint. Workers have (according to the foremen) used rubber boots, rubber gloves, coveralls and forced air respirators while working in the tanks, but there is no actual knowledge of the hazards involved. It is therefore my desire to prepare an information pamphlet for use by workers, foremen and physicians who may be required to treat possible tetraethyl lead poisoning cases.

I recall that a considerable amount of time was devoted to tetraethyl lead poisoning at the course on occupational medicine that I attended at the Taft Sanitary Engineering Center in February 1936. I find, however, that my memory isn't dependable enough to write any factual material and the libraries in the Alaska area are so limited in their scope that source material is not available.

I should like to impose upon you, or someone at the Taft Sanitary Engineering Center, to the extent of asking for some information on tetraethyl lead poisoning. Some of the specific information I desire is:

1. The extent of danger of tetraethyl lead poisoning to a person working on a pipeline and having only casual exposure to loaded gasoline.
2. The extent of danger of tetraethyl lead poisoning to a person who is required to enter a storage tank for the purpose of cleaning sludge out of it.

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