

ETHYL GASOLINE CORPORATION

CHRYSLER BUILDING
405 LEXINGTON AVENUE

NEW YORK April 18, 1941

INTER-OFFICE
CORRESPONDENCE

Dr. R. A. Kehoe

Dear Dr. Kehoe:

We are attaching letters dated April 3rd and April 14th from Louis F. Hall of the Great Lakes Oil Company and from John H. Walsh of the Tide Water Associated Oil Company, which were referred to us by our New York Division office.

The Great Lakes Oil Company is a Tide Water jobber located at Niagara Falls.

We are advised by Mr. Goltz of the New York Division office that the law suit in question is now pending and Tide Water would appreciate your taking any action in the immediate future which you may deem helpful.

Very truly yours,

O. B. LEWIS

By: *Russell Schell*

IC
enclosure

KE 0004597

AUTOMOTIVE SALES DIVISION
SALES ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT

TIDE WATER ASSOCIATED OIL COMPANY

TIDE WATER DIVISION
17 BATTERY PLACE
NEW YORK

RECEIVED	
ETHYL GASOLINE CORPORATION	
NEW YORK DIVISION	
APR 15 1941	
J.A.C. 4/15	R.L.G. 4/15
W.M.T.	

April 14, 1941

Ethyl Gasoline Corporation
135 East 42nd Street
New York, N. Y.

Attention: Mr. Roy L. Goltz

Gentlemen:

I am enclosing herewith copy of a letter from Mr. Louis F. Hall, of the Great Lakes Oil Company, Niagara Falls, N. Y., which is self-explanatory.

We would appreciate any help which you may be able to give Mr. Hall covering this matter.

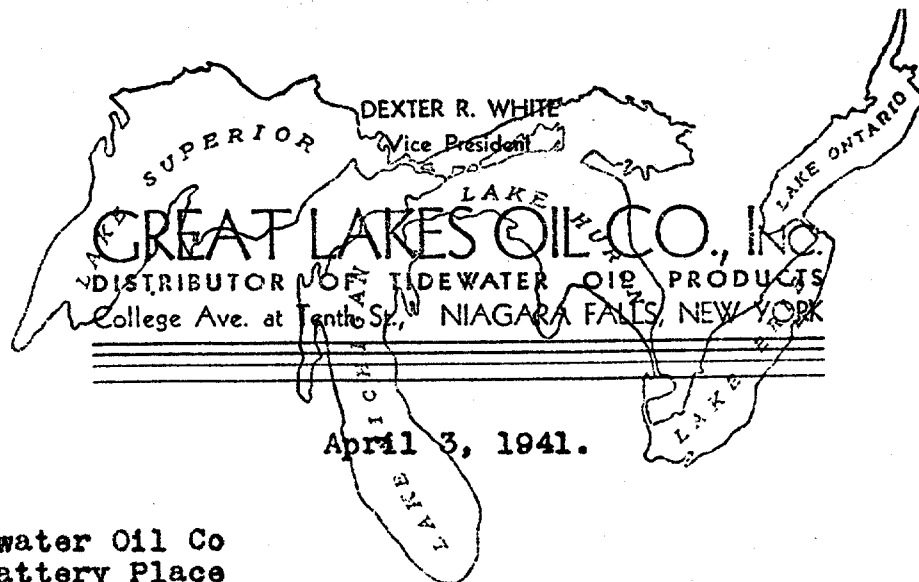
Very truly yours,

John H. Walsh
John H. Walsh, Manager

JHW:JH
Enclosure

KE 0004598

W. K. HALL, M. D.
President



LOUIS F. HALL
Sec'y - Treasurer

April 3, 1941.

Tidewater Oil Co
17 Battery Place
New York City, N.Y.

Gentlemen:

A gasoline operator in one of our stations reported to us that he was running short on gasoline in one of his tanks and thought that he had a leak. We removed the tank about a week later and brought it back to our yard. About a week after this we received a report from the owner of a store located next to the gasoline station, that in digging a hole in his cellar he discovered a large quantity of gasoline there. This gasoline was found to be floating on top of a small underground stream of water, the direction pointing towards the gasoline station. Test holes were dug around this area and gasoline and water were found in 4 holes dug on these two premises. In three holes dug off the premises traces of gasoline could be detected in the damp soil while further away only water was discovered. A considerable amount of gasoline was taken from the original hole in the cellar and the three holes on the station. For about 5 weeks this condition existed during which time the station and store were roped off by the fire department as a fire hazard. During this time the owner of the store got a stick, attached a pail to it, went into his cellar and skimmed off the gasoline on top of the water and used same in his truck and car and stored the rest in drums. He is now suing us for loss of business and a very substantial amount for his health, claiming that he is permanently sick and unable to attend to his business due to the tetra ethyl lead in the gasoline that he breathed and handled in obtaining from the cellar of his store.

Would you kindly write to the Ethyl Gasoline Corporation requesting them for information as follows:

1. Whether the breathing of the fumes of gasoline that contains lead would give him lead poison.
2. Whether the occasional spillage of gasoline on his hands from attempting to recover same from his cellar would give him lead poison or have a serious effect on his health.
3. Whether they would be willing to give us technical assistance when the case comes up for trial.
4. Any other information that might help us.

Yours very truly,

April 26, 1941

Mr. John E. Walsh
Tidewater Associated Oil Company
17 Battery Place
New York City
New York

Dear Mr. Walsh:

Your letter of April 14th addressed to Mr. Golz of the Ethyl Gasoline Corporation and enclosing a copy of a letter from [REDACTED] of the Great Lakes Oil Company, has been brought to my attention through the New York office of the Ethyl Gasoline Corporation. I assume you will wish to transmit any information which is given to Mr. [REDACTED] and, therefore, I am writing directly to you in the matter.

The examination of Mr. [REDACTED] letter indicates quite clearly that the claimant was definitely exposed to gasoline, and presumably that the gasoline exposure which he suffered was the result of leakage from one of your tanks. Whatever damage this occasioned to him is, of course, beyond my province to decide. The question raised by Mr. [REDACTED] concerned the possibility of significant exposure to lead in the vapors of the gasoline. The answer to this is quite clear. Under the circumstances it is not to be anticipated that any exposure to lead compounds worthy of note occurred. First, the vapors arising from liquid gasoline do not contain appreciable quantities of tetraethyl lead since the volatility of the lead is so low as compared to the gasoline. Vapors to which he was exposed, and to whatever degree he was exposed, were those of gasoline alone. Moreover contact of his skin with the gasoline in the cellar would not give rise to appreciable lead absorption, and would not produce lead poisoning. The same reason applies here as in the case of the handling of commercial gasoline. It has been demonstrated quite clearly that contact with commercial gasoline does not result in significant lead absorption under any conditions of exposure. In this instance it is not to be supposed that the gasoline was unusual in its concentration of lead, and it is not to be supposed, therefore, that any opportunity for abnormal lead exposure

presented itself.

Evidence which we have obtained in other instances of leakage, has demonstrated that much of the lead is leached out of the gasoline which trickles through the soil as a consequence of the leak. It is particularly for this reason that I say that no unusual exposure to lead would be occasioned by inhalation of or contact with gasoline in this man's cellar.

Undoubtedly a number of hypothetical and practical questions could be raised with reference to this situation. It would difficult, if not impossible, to anticipate all of these questions in advance. However there is a very large mass of evidence covering the whole question of potential exposure to lead in commercial leaded gasoline, and any and all of such evidence can be put at your disposal in connection with this case. I should be glad to discuss it with any representatives of yours who may be involved in the handling of the matter, and I will be glad to give any assistance which is possible.

The only point which it occurs to me to add to my discussion at this time, is that generally speaking exposure to gasoline vapors is not a serious matter. Obviously if one is exposed to high concentrations, gasoline poisoning or intoxication takes place. Usually this does not result in permanent injury, and therefore it is to be expected that the claimant in this case would recover his health completely, if the source of his exposure to gasoline is eliminated. If he does not recover promptly, it would probably be because he has some other illness unrelated to his claimed exposure to gasoline.

Very truly yours,

RAK:is

Robert A. Kehoe, M.D.