

July 22, 1940

Dr. H. B. Yettes
Tropical Oil Company
Barranca
Colombia

Dear Doctor Yettes:

A short time ago I received a request from Mr. Lester B. Roberts of the Associated Ethyl Company Ltd., asking for information with respect to the adequacy of the periodic examination of workmen engaged in mixing Ethyl Fluid with gasoline.

I am replying to this by sending you a copy of a memorandum which I prepared some time ago for the use of physicians in connection with the supervision of these workmen. This, I believe, will convey my general ideas on the subject but in order to be more specific, I am sending you a copy of our examination blanks which cover the initial physical examination and which deal also with the details of the periodic examination in a tabular form. It is our practice to re-examine workmen in detail on the occasion of each visit. We question them carefully as to any matters of personal or medical consequence since the last examination, we repeat the physical examination entirely and we try to size up the man's physical condition. The examination of your record form indicates that your examinations are as comprehensive as our own apparently, and that the laboratory procedures which you carry out are somewhat more detailed than our own. My associates have to make most of their examinations at refineries where frequently there are either no laboratory facilities or inadequate ones, and consequently we can not make extensive laboratory studies. However we do examine the blood for its hemoglobin content and we make blood films for subsequent examination both for abnormal cellular forms and for stippled erythrocytes. If a man presents any suggestive illness, we go further and carry out any other diagnostic measures which may be indicated by the condition which presents itself. In rare instances where there is any question in the minds of the workmen or the management concerning lead exposure, we obtain samples of blood and urine

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for chemical analysis in order to determine the magnitude of the lead exposure. However we do this rarely for the reason that fifteen years of experience have proven beyond all doubt that when the plants are properly built and operated, there is no significant lead exposure.

If my information is correct, you are associated with Dr. Guay and if this is true, I think you will find that Dr. Guay has a series of articles translated into Spanish which deal with a number of aspects of the problem of Ethyl Fluid and leaded gasoline. If you do not have access to such articles, I would appreciate your dropping me a line and letting me know since I can send you published material either in English or in Spanish which will present the facts and our conclusions concerning them with reference to the occupational hazards which are associated with this industry.

If there are any further questions which you would like to raise, I shall be glad if you would write to me directly.

Cordially yours,

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Robert A. Kehoe, M.D.

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