

ETHYL CORPORATION
CHRYSLER BUILDING
NEW YORK 17, N.Y.

July 16, 1948

Circular Letter No. S-26-48

Subject: Tank Cleaning Accident

Reference: Safety Manual Section XII

TO OPERATIONS MANAGERS

COPY FOR *Mr. R. L. Kline*

Gentlemen:

During the latter part of June there was an accident resulting from the cleaning of three 12,000 barrel storage tanks. Two men were poisoned from exposure to lead, resulting in the death of one of them and the acute illness of the second.

Ethyl Tank Cleaning Precautions were not followed, particularly with respect to the use of an air-line mask. The cleaning of these particular tanks was not observed by an Ethyl Corporation representative. The same crew had been under observation by our representative as recently as the day before exposure occurred, and had operated satisfactorily.

Before leaving the job to do other work previously planned, our representative gave complete instructions regarding the cleaning of these tanks, and was assured by the tank cleaning contractor that his men would continue to follow our tank cleaning precautions.

As a result of this accident, we are forced to conclude that our modified tank cleaning policy, as it may now be interpreted can result in misplaced confidence in tank cleaning crews and therefore it does not offer the degree of protection necessary to maintain our past record on accident prevention.

At an early date, when all of the information on this accident has been accumulated and analyzed, changes in our existing tank cleaning policy may be necessary. You will then be notified. In the meantime, we ask you to review the existing policy and to interpret it in such a way that only the pressure of other work, potentially as hazardous or more hazardous than tank cleaning, would prevent maximum attendance at tank cleaning jobs in strict accordance with the spirit of the modified tank cleaning policy.

Very truly yours,

E. O. Jones
E. O. Jones

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