

COPY

Mr. J. J. Frey

New York

E. K. Locher

New York

Tank Cleaning Accident
Carolina Terminals
Wilmington, North Carolina

July 16, 1948

On Saturday, June 26, [REDACTED] (colored), an employee of Tank Cleaners Incorporated of Jacksonville, Florida, died in a Jacksonville hospital as the result of lead poisoning. [REDACTED] (colored), also an employee of Tank Cleaners Incorporated, has been confined to the hospital with a severe case of lead poisoning. At the present time he is expected to recover.

Investigation shows that lead exposure probably occurred during the cleaning of three 12,000 barrel tanks at Carolina Terminals, leased and operated by Cape Fear Terminals, Wilmington, North Carolina during the days of June 19 (Saturday) and June 21 (Monday). These tanks had not been in use for a period of approximately five years and no accurate record is available as to when they last stored leaded gasoline. There is no evidence that they had ever been used as blending tanks or that gasoline in the tanks had been spiked. Ethyl Tank Cleaning Precautions were not followed during the cleaning of the tanks, and specifically an airline mask was not used. During these two days [REDACTED] was exposed a total of sixteen hours and [REDACTED] a total of five hours during the time spent in the tanks.

The same two men, on both jobs under the direction of L.A. Nichols (white), foreman of Tank Cleaners Incorporated, had cleaned another tank of 40,000 barrel capacity during the days of June 16, 17, and 18 at Cape Fear Terminals. This cleaning was observed by an Ethyl representative and Ethyl Tank Cleaning Precautions were satisfactorily followed. Our representative recommended, and was assured by one of the partners of Tank Cleaners Incorporated, that our recommended precautions would be followed during the cleaning of the tanks in which exposure took place; therefore, he decided that it was unnecessary for him to be present.

The Medical Department's report is not yet available, but preliminary indication shows that this is one of the most severe cases of lead poisoning on record. Mr. L. Williams, a partner of Tank Cleaners Incorporated, has told a representative of our Southern Region that no legal action will be instituted against Ethyl Corporation.

Ellis K. Locher

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