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OUR REF. K.2.

YOUR REF.

DATE 2nd June, 1948.

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Dr. R.A. Kehoe,
Kettering Laboratory of Applied Physiology,
School of Medicine,
Eden Avenue,
Cincinnati,
OHIO,
U.S.A.

Dear Dr. Kehoe,

I am sorry to trouble you again but three points came up at a recent Technical Committee meeting on which I have been asked to obtain your comments.

(1) Sylphon Seal - Is it still being used at Baton Rouge and is it considered satisfactory? I did make an enquiry on this in my letter of the 16th February, 1948.

(2) The form, type and construction of the activated carbon air filter placed on the air inlet of the compressor.

(3) A section of the Management here is pressing for the removal of still booths. Another section, including myself, want to retain them, as there have been a number of leaks recently and one spill, and the booths at least keep these isolated. I understood from you that in one building at Baton Rouge the still booths had been removed. This made cleaning and the operation much easier, and, moreover, there has been no appreciable increase in the lead absorption and excretion of the men employed in this particular building as compared with those buildings in which booths were still installed. Has the picture changed since Baton Rouge has been on the reduced cycle and heavier charge? Was any additional ventilation or redesign required for the still floor without booths?

Professor Pavlovsky of Buenos Aires is in this country at the moment and Professor Dodds is throwing a luncheon party for him tomorrow at the Dorchester, at which I shall be present. I am bringing him back here tomorrow evening, and showing him around the plant on Friday. From present knowledge he looks after twelve plants in the Buenos Aires area. He has been asked by Risso-Gill to advise on the appointments of consultants at six projected plants in other parts of Argentina. I will let you know the outcome of our discussion.

As regards this plant at present, I am sorry to say we are getting nowhere. We have got it superficially clean, and have a gang going around doing the detailed cleaning in addition to that already done by the process

Mr. R.A. Kehoe, Cincinnati.

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workers.

As a result of our combined American experiences, some seventy-five modifications and improvements proposed are in abeyance owing to shortage of materials and men, and I cannot see any hope of a significant improvement in the degree of exposure here until these are completed. In some places there is no hope of improvement; for example, there is not sufficient power in the exhaust motor in the furnace building to permit the installation of a jacket around the dry sludge chute and torque motor.

We have had some pretty bad spills here recently, including an overflow of a blending tank, which contaminated about 100 square feet of the floor and upset a test I was running. We had one volunteer to do a week on packing drums, blending, stencilling and bung cleaning, who let us have all samples passed here and at home. He was supposed to be on a 52 hour week, with one day off in every seven, but, unfortunately, one week he was permitted to go up to 70 hours. It is known that if workers in this particular building do 70 hours without a break, they almost invariably show very high figures, and require to come out of the building. I tried to fix a 40 hour limit with one day off in seven, but this had to be modified to 52 hours to suit working conditions. The type of work had no bearing on the excretions, which, with the exception of two samples, were above normal but within safe limits. Strangely enough the excess of spillage did not show up in the lead excretion of urine, and the excretion on the day off was not significantly lower. There was a tendency, however, for the excretion to be lower on the day following the day off when the individual had returned to work. It is appreciated that some contamination of these samples is inevitable. We are proposing to run a further test on this man for three months in the Autumn. I will naturally let you have the results.

Last month we did a series of tests on dust masks issued to workmen in the furnace and alloy buildings. All had been in use for approximately the same length of time. The lead content of these masks was in inverse proportion to the amount of lead found in the faeces. We have since learned that we may have been unkind to some of the individuals concerned, as the face-pieces did not fit, and we are now endeavouring to ensure that there will be more than one type of face-piece so that each individual can be issued with reasonable protection.

With kindest personal regards,

Yours very sincerely,



E. Davison.

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