

ETHYL GASOLINE CORPORATION

MANUFACTURING AND TRAFFIC DEPARTMENT

INTER-OFFICE
CORRESPONDENCE

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June 13, 1939

Memorandum to:

Mr. O. B. Lewis

In connection with your letter of June 9, further to a discussion of sludge difficulty, I do not think that the amount of sludge present in Fluid is any higher today than at any time in the past. The fact that we have had three or four reports of trouble in the unloading of cars recently does not necessarily imply that the sludge concentration has increased, since I feel that this is largely a cumulative question. This sludge problem is not at all new, and the presence of a sludge cleaning truck as permanent equipment is due evidence that we may expect to have sludge difficulty from time to time. As you have indicated, in your opinion this is one of the most important safety problems of today, and we do not mean to imply that the Manufacturing Department looks upon this as an inevitable and incurable evil. On the contrary this subject is one of the most active at the moment, and we have recent indications of a most promising development for essential elimination of this difficulty.

With regard to your theory as to what happened at Bayonne, we shall not attempt to either prove or disprove it. We only know that the condition of the truck upon return from Bayonne was perfect, whereas normally cars or trucks which cause trouble are found to have fairly high sludge deposits. We do concede the theoretical possibility that if a batch of Fluid is sludgy, it may cause trouble during unloading. We also know that the distribution of solids in a tank need not necessarily be uniform, and since sludge is sometimes present as material of lighter gravity than Fluid, producing a top sludge, it is quite possible that this substance, the last portion being unloaded from a tank, can clog the standpipe. However, in order for this to be the mechanism of the process, the average composition in the standpipe would be of lower gravity, and therefore your theory of the force of gravity working against the vacuum to reach the point of equilibrium would not hold. I don't know that we can differentiate very well, but it would be my guess that bottom sludge rather than top sludge would cause the most trouble.

Please rest assured that we are not just sitting back and ignoring the situation, but are doing everything possible to bring a satisfactory solution to this problem, which we recognize as one belonging to our own department.

J. H. Schaefer

By *CW.*

C:AB

CC: Dr. Robert A. Kehoe
Mr. R. C. Murphy
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