

Ethyl Questions Lead Regulations

Houston's Ethyl Corporation recently obtained information on the proposed regulation affecting lead in gasoline from the Environmental Protection Agency as a result of the settlement of an Ethyl court case involving the Freedom of Information Act.

"Ethyl was forced into court to get 'public' information which has never been made 'public,'" said Gerald L. Rice, an Ethyl chemical engineer. "The information explains how public money was used to make a study which proved what Ethyl has been saying all along: lead in gasoline is not affecting public health."

The EPA regulation requires "that unleaded gas be made available nationally after July 1, 1974. Any individual who operates a single retail outlet which sells 200,000 or more gallons annually shall offer unleaded gas, or any person who operates six or more retail outlets shall offer unleaded gas to no fewer than 60 per cent of such outlets."

The EPA has also required "that the lead content per gallon in leaded gasolines be decreased from two grams to 1.25 grams per gallon during the period Jan. 1974 to Jan. 1977."

Edward E. David Jr. of the President's Office of Science and Technology said in 1972 that the "OST does not believe it is in the interest of the consumer or the nation to have a uniform automotive emissions standard."

Thirty per cent of the nation's autos are in a region with an air quality that is unimpaired by cars meeting 1972 emissions standards. Many larger portions of the country have an air quality that would be unimpaired utilizing thermal reactors, some exhaust gas recirculation, and lead particulate traps if needed.

Only a small portion of the country requires the most expensive emission abatement equipment, namely, catalytic converters mandated by the current automotive emission standards. Only lead-free gasoline is needed for this equipment.

"The Clean Air Act should be modified, Davis said in his November 1972 report, "to diminish the enormous financial burden with a few compensatory benefits to the consumer required by the present legislative acts. Should the Act be modified, the requirement for unleaded gasoline to be nationally available in large quantities diminishes to a requirement for large quantities of un-

leaded gasolines in the regions where catalytic converters must be used and enough mobility in the regions where cars equipped with catalytic converters may drive but are not required. The issue for the government is whether to require retailers to plan to have a uniform widespread distribution of unleaded gasoline."

"OST has reviewed the medical evidence that supports EPA's desire to reduce the lead content of gas and finds the information unsupported by the evidence,"

said David.

OST also found better strategies should the health issue be more supportable than the one selected, namely, the use of lead traps in car exhaust systems rather than a general reduction of lead in gasoline, Davis told Nixon.

"There is a lack of medical evidence to support EPA's findings," explained David. "There is no correlation between airborne lead and lead levels in blood for the range of airborne lead levels encountered in rural or urban com-

munities."

On the average, urban populations have higher lead blood level concentrations than suburban populations (19 micrograms as compared to 17 micrograms). However, there is the same difference in lead level concentration between smokers and nonsmokers.

Though airborne levels were higher in 1968-69 than in 1961-62, there is no indication that blood lead content in either urban or rural population is approaching the significant danger level of 40 micrograms per millilitre.

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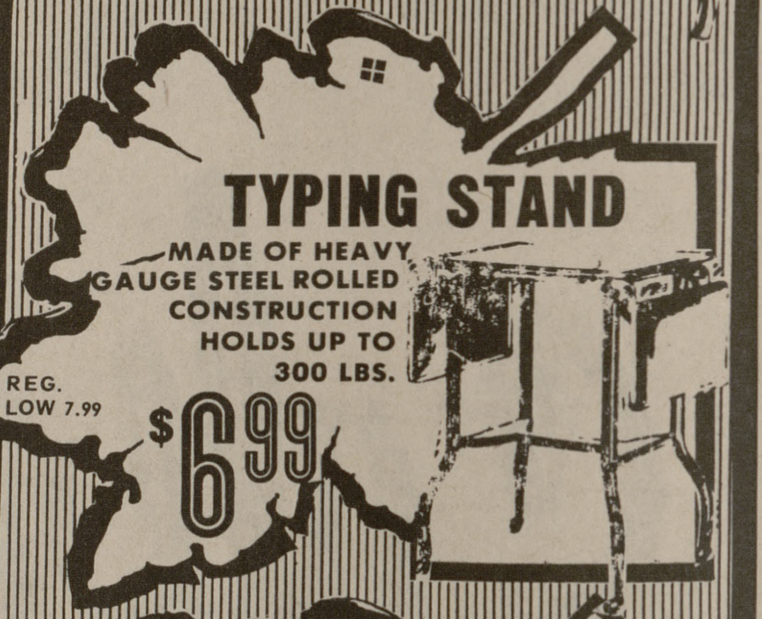
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Nine Spelunkers Make Journey To Area Cave

The Texas A&M Speleological Society will hold its second organizational meeting Oct. 10, at 9 p. m. in the MSC, rooms N and O. This meeting will be the last one that new members will be allowed to participate in the field trip of Oct. 13, which will explore Gorman Cave near Bend, Texas.

Gorman Cave is 30 miles southwest of Lampasas, Texas and it is in the heart of the Texas Cave area which begins south of I-35 and extends to Mexico.

The Texas A&M Speleological Society hopes to explore new life forms and geological formations which are found in Texas caves. "Caving" as it is called by the initiated is an outdoor, indoor sport which gives members a chance of adventure as well as recreation.

The club had its first organizational meeting last Wednesday and chose Bob Bliss as Temporary Chairman and David Roberts, as Secretary Treasurer. Both have experience as cavers. Bob Bliss is a member of the National Speleological Society (NSS) and Dave Roberts has done extensive caving in France and Germany.

Bliss and his wife Vicki, Dave Roberts, Clay Hughes, Wayne Walker and his wife Kathy, John McFarlin, Dewayne Spain and David Finrock have already taken an exploratory trip to Gorman Cave.

John McFarlin, Houston freshman, said that the cave is only accessible by "rapelling" which is a descent by rope similar to mountain climbing. Once you are in the cave you have only three light sources which separate you from total darkness, the carbide lamp or miners hat, an electrical source or flashlight and candle light.

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