



The Wisconsin Interfaith Climate & Energy Campaign, Inc.

"People of all faiths working toward a just and sustainable future"

PO Box 260066

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WASTE & MATERIALS
MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

OPTIONS TO REGULATE MERCURY REDUCTIONS

On May 18, 2000, a petition was submitted to the Department of Natural Resources and Natural Resources Board to adopt administrative rules under s. 285.11(9), Wis. Stats., requiring reductions in mercury emissions from the largest known sources of emissions.

The Bureau of Air Management was asked to form a Technical Advisory Group, and a Citizen Advisory Committee. Minutes from a March 6, 2002 CAC meeting included the following people and groups they represent:

Facilitator: Bert Stitt

Members Attending: Keith Reopelle, Wisconsin Environmental Decade; Russ Ruland, Muskellunge Club of Wisconsin; Annabeth Reitter, Wisconsin Paper Council; Jeff Schoepke, Wisconsin Manufacturers & Commerce; Michele Pluta (alternate), Alliant Energy; Wayne Stroessner, Random Lake Association; John Coleman, Great Lakes Indian Fish & Wildlife Commission; Ed Newman (alternate), Wisconsin Utilities Association, Inc.; Mark Yeager (alternate), Environmentally Concerned Citizens of Lakeland Areas; Kathleen Standen, Wisconsin Electric; Dave Hoopman, Wisconsin Federation of Cooperatives, Lloyd Eagan, DNR

Others Attending: Marty Burkholder, Jon Heinrich, Tom Karman and Anne Bogar, DNR.

I was part of the DNR's Mercury Citizen Advisory Committee that met for nearly two years in 2001 and 2002. We spent many hours in attempting to iron out a rule for regulating mercury emissions.

The final Committee Retreat Issue Brief on Mercury Emissions Rule dated 6/27/02 stated on page 7: "Reduction Requirements - Major electric utilities would be required to achieve the following reductions in mercury emissions from baseline emissions by the following dates after promulgation.

- Five years -----30% reduction
- Ten years -----50% reduction
- Fifteen years --90% reduction

During our long meetings, we learned that there already are technologies to reduce mercury levels by 90 percent and only recently our Governor, Jim Doyle, made a pledge to cut emissions by 90 percent.

5/25/07

There is absolutely no reason to back off on an agreement already negotiated with all concerned groups.

Since the Committee report was written in mid 2002, the EPA's top mercury scientist, Kathryn Mahaffey, released new findings indicating that 630,000 babies born in the U.S. each year, one in six, are at risk of mercury-related developmental problems contracted in the womb -- a number nearly twice as high as the EPA's current official estimate. Mahaffey's new calculations are based on the finding that mercury concentrates at higher levels in the umbilical cords of pregnant women than in their bloodstreams, indicating that fetuses could be getting higher doses of mercury than previously thought. We must reduce mercury emissions as much as we possibly can to protect these infants.

It appears that we have either one of four alternatives:

1. A 90% reduction in mercury emissions by 2012 in line with over 20 states with more stringent requirements including Minnesota and Illinois -- our neighbors in the Upper Midwest.
2. The EPA CAMR (70% reduction by 2018 with trading and banking of credits).
3. The EPA CAMR sunseting trading after 2015.
4. The EPA CAMR without trading and an additional reduction level to 90% by 2020.

Without question, WICEC recommends the first alternative. All others would cause Wisconsin to move in a reverse direction.

Sincerely,



Wayne Stroessner, WICEC President
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