

Canada-Wide Standards for Mercury (Existing Base Metal Smelters)
- Manitoba Implementation Plans -

Overview of the Standard:

Canada-wide Standards (CWS) are being established and implemented pursuant to the 1998 Canada-wide Accord on Environmental Harmonization of the Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment (CCME) and its Canada-wide Environmental Standards Sub-agreement. The Council of Ministers (COM) at their June 2000 meeting endorsed Standards for mercury from base smelting smelters. CWS are developed through an intergovernmental process engaging external stakeholders in advisory or consultative roles. Implementation of the standards are the responsibility of each jurisdiction.

The base metal smelting sector has historically been responsible for much of the mercury emitted in Canada. However, the application of a number of process changes and stack control technologies have combined to reduce emissions by more than 90% since 1988. As of the year 2000, mercury emissions from this sector remained the single largest emission source with a release of 2.8 tonnes per year.

In Manitoba, the Hudson Bay Mining and Smelting Co., Limited (HBM&S) zinc-copper smelter in Flin Flon has been identified to have mercury emissions to the atmosphere. With the commissioning of its pressure leaching process for zinc in 1993, significant reductions in mercury emissions were achieved. Since 1994, a continuing small annual decrease has been realized. For the year 2001, HBM&S emitted 1.06 tonnes of mercury at a rate of 6.2 grams per tonne of total metal production from its operation. Manitoba's other base metal smelter, INCO Thompson, processes ores that contain very low levels of mercury and, therefore, emissions of mercury are accordingly low.

CWS Numeric Target and Timeframe:

For existing facilities:

application by all primary zinc, lead and copper smelters of best available pollution prevention and control techniques economically achievable to achieve an environmental source performance (atmospheric emission) guideline of 2 g Hg/tonne total production of finished metals.

Existing facilities are expected to make a determined effort to meet this standard by 2008, coincident with implementation of the federal Strategic Options Report. Jurisdictions will evaluate changes and upgrades to existing facilities to ensure they constitute determined efforts.

Implementation of the CWS for Mercury at Existing Base Metal Smelters (BMS) -
Manitoba

General Accountability:

At this time, Manitoba proposes to continue to liaise with its one affected smelter (HBM&S) to voluntarily work towards achievement of the BMS CWS for existing

facilities. Included in this approach are provisions of the CWS for determined efforts within the context of best available pollution prevention and control techniques, technically and economically achievable.

Milestones and Timeframes:

Annual reports on the status of emissions relative to the CWS and opportunities for continuing to reduce releases of mercury are due by January 31st of the following year. The Department will continue to track progress on achievement of the standard and work with the company to realize the greatest reductions economically and technically feasible; no other milestones or deliverables have been established at this time.

Public Role:

Manitoba intends to engage public participation through its annual local community meetings with interested and affected stakeholders, in response to direct requests for information and through its general release of publicly available information.

Access to Information:

Information related to reporting on achievement of this CWS will be placed in the Flin Flon and Winnipeg "Public Registries", as maintained under Manitoba's Environment Act. Manitoba maintains a number of "public registries" across the Province where information related to environmental assessment, licencing and other information can be placed for public access.

Verifiable Progress:

Annual reports on the status of achievement of the CWS and on-going efforts towards reducing releases of mercury, consistent with provisions of the CWS, have been requested of the affected company.

Manitoba Conservation

May 16, 2002