

## Implementation of the CWS on Mercury for Dental Amalgam Waste - 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) endorsed the standard on mercury for dental amalgam waste at its September 2001 meeting. CWS are developed through an intergovernmental process which engages external stakeholders in advisory or consultative roles. Implementation of the standards are the responsibility of each jurisdiction.

Though dental amalgam remains a well-suited material for restoration of dental health, the removal of old fillings and activities associated with new placements generate a mercury-containing waste which can become an environmental issue. A precautionary approach to limit environmental releases through waste diversion is appropriate in the absence of conclusive proof that the amalgam particles are inert.

### CWS Numeric Target and Timeframe:

The CWS is the application of “best management practices” to achieve a 95% national reduction in mercury releases from dental amalgam waste discharges to the environment by 2005, from a base year of 2000.

Best management practices are defined as including the use of an ISO certified amalgam trap, or equivalent, and appropriate management of the waste so mercury does not enter the environment.

### General Accountability:

This CWS has been developed with a view towards a largely voluntary approach. Compliance may be covered by agreement or regulated and legally enforced in some areas, such as sewer use bylaws in municipalities. A Memorandum of Understanding between Environment Canada and the Canadian Dental Association, signed in February 2002, lays out the commitment by Canadian dentists to promote the adoption of the CWS by all its dentists, to implement the standard, and report annually to the federal government. A complementary agreement may be developed between Manitoba and the Manitoba Dental Association to address aspects of implementation of this CWS specifically pertinent to Manitoba, if this is deemed to be beneficial to all parties.

### Milestones and Timeframes:

The Manitoba Dental Association has identified that voluntary achievement of this CWS has been targeted for early 2004. As of February 2002, over 5% of dental offices had already installed the required amalgam separators.

Public Role :

The Memorandum of Understanding between the Canadian Dental Association and Environment Canada is publicly available. Any agreement between Manitoba and its dental association would also be a public document. The public are encouraged to discuss with their dentist options for other materials that could be used for dental fillings.

Access to Information:

Regular reports will be publicly issued on the status of implementation of the CWS.

Verifiable Progress:

Activities and mechanism for ensuring progress towards achievement can be verified will be developed among the Parties.

Manitoba Conservation

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