

Implementation of the CWS for Mercury-Containing Lamps - 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 for mercury-containing lamps at its April 30-May 1, 2001 meeting. CWS are developed through an intergovernmental process engaging external stakeholders in advisory or consultative roles. Implementation of the standards is the responsibility of each jurisdiction.

Though individual mercury-containing lamps are highly energy efficient, the total annual release of mercury vapour to the atmosphere in Canada from all lamps during their manufacture, transport, landfilling, etc. is about 180 kg/year. Significant reductions in the mercury content of standard fluorescent tubes have already been achieved. Ongoing efforts need to be directed towards further reducing mercury content of lamps and seeking opportunities to reduce mercury releases from breakage and from waste disposal.

CWS Numeric Target and Timeframe:

The CWS is a 70% reduction by 2005 and an 80% reduction by 2010 in the average content of mercury in all mercury-containing lamps sold in Canada, from a 1990 baseline.

General Accountability:

This CWS has been developed as a largely voluntary pollution prevention approach to be undertaken by lamp manufacturers who have committed to make reductions in the use of mercury in lamps and to report on progress of achievement of the CWS.

Jurisdictions have agreed to pursue recycling of spent lamps by encouraging safe disposal consistent with solid waste management priorities. As part of the initial actions jointly agreed to by jurisdictions, Manitoba has agreed to:

- review possible barriers to recovery and recycling of lamps that may be subject to hazardous waste regulatory requirements;
- promote lower level mercury lamps in government buildings as part of its procurement policy; and
- assess and promote spent lamp recovery and recycling programs in government buildings.

In the summer of 2001, Manitoba released for public consultation a discussion paper and a proposed regulation which proposes product stewardship requirements for the sellers and manufacturers of mercury-containing lamps among a variety of product categories. Though this program has a special focus on household hazardous waste, plans must also address service in industrial, commercial and institutional settings.

Milestones and Timeframes:

No specific milestones nor timelines have been established as yet for increasing greater use of low mercury lamps in government buildings or recycling of spent lamps.

The Department has reviewed comments from the public review of the proposed product stewardship program and continues to meet with interested/affected stakeholders to hear views on various program options. A final decision/announcement on this program is pending.

Public Role:

Manitobans have been afforded a direct participatory role in the development of the product stewardship program. Proposed business plans will be subject to public review and comment and assessed by Manitoba Conservation against a set of standard criteria such as financial, service, educational, and operational requirements.

Access to Information:

The regulation would require each stewardship program to prepare a publicly released annual report on activities and achievements, including financial statements. Stewards (i.e. companies selling designated products) may have specific reporting requirements imposed upon them as part of the requirement for subscribing to or operating a product stewardship program.

Verifiable Progress:

Activities would be subject to enforcement by Manitoba Conservation.

Manitoba Conservation
May 16, 2002