

**CANADA-WIDE  
STANDARD  
FOR MERCURY**  
**- Alberta Implementation Plan**

***New Base Metal  
Smelters***



# Canada-Wide Standard for Mercury Alberta Implementation Plan

## - *New Base Metal Smelters* -

### Background

In January 1998, the Canada-Wide Accord on Environmental Harmonization was signed by Alberta and most other jurisdictions. With this signing, Alberta Environment committed to participate in the Canada-Wide Standards development process under the Standards Sub-agreement. One key objective of the sub-agreement is to develop ambient standards that provide a common high degree of environmental quality. It also anticipates standards for discharge limits where such standards represent the best strategy for achieving that environmental goal.

The Canada-Wide Standards development process reviewed the nature of the mercury issue and concluded that two distinctive source categories were amenable to further actions. They are life-cycle management of products containing mercury to minimize releases, and reduction or minimization actions for major point source emissions.

### Nature and Scope of the Standard(s)

The standards reflect the application of “best available techniques” on a facility-specific basis, and a uniform reporting mechanism based upon environmental source performance guidelines. Standards for existing facilities reflect actions already taken to reduce emissions of mercury. New facilities are required to utilize the best available techniques to avoid or reduce metal emissions generally and mercury emissions specifically.

### Numeric Targets

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

For new and expanding smelters, application of best available pollution prevention and control techniques to minimize mercury emissions throughout the life-cycle of the minerals in question to achieve an environmental source performance (atmospheric emission) guideline of 0.2 g mercury/tonne production of finished zinc, nickel and lead, and 1 g mercury/tonne of finished copper, and consideration of a mercury offset program to ensure no “net” emission increases occur.

### General Accountability

Alberta does not currently have any smelters. The Canada-Wide Standard for mercury will be applied to any new facilities as a condition in approvals issued under the Alberta *Environmental Protection and Enhancement Act*. Achievement of the standard will be based on monitoring information specified in the approval. This information will be used to assess compliance with the Canada-Wide Standard.

## **Public Role/Transparency**

The approval process for new facilities includes public notice of the proposed project. This allows for affected stakeholders to submit any concerns they may have with respect to the project to Alberta Environment for consideration prior to approval.

## **Access to Information**

Information requirements in an approval are available to the public.

## **Verifiable Progress**

As part of approval conditions, companies are required to submit annual reports outlining facility performance with respect to approval conditions, including mercury-monitoring requirements. Alberta Environment will use this report to verify achievement of the Canada-Wide Standard.

