CANADA-WIDE STANDARD FOR MERCURY

- Alberta Implementation Plan

New Waste Incineration Facilities

Alberta Environment

Canada-Wide Standard for Mercury
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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)

New facilities will be expected to comply with emission limits in the exhaust gas exiting the stack of the facility.

Numeric Targets

For new or expanding facilities of any size, application of best available pollution prevention and control techniques, such as a mercury waste diversion program, to achieve a maximum concentration in the exhaust gases from the facility as follows:

Municipal waste incineration - 20 µg/Rm^3
Medical waste incineration - 20 µg/Rm^3
Hazardous waste incineration - 50 µg/Rm^3
Sewage sludge incineration - 70 µg/Rm^3

General Accountability

Alberta's approach to new waste incineration facilities will be to incorporate the appropriate incinerator Canada-Wide Standard (CWS) for mercury as a condition in approvals issued under the *Alberta Environmental Protection and Enhancement Act* (EPEA) for large facilities (capacity greater than 120 tonnes/year). Small facilities operating at 10 tonnes/month or less (120 tonnes/year or less) are required to obtain a registration number under the EPEA, and follow a Code of Practice. The Code of Practice prohibits burning of hazardous waste containing mercury or it's compounds. Achievement of the CWS at large facilities will be based on stack survey information.

Public Role/Transparency

The approval process for new large 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. For small facilities, the operators will be required to keep records of waste incinerated. This information is made available to Alberta Environment on request, and can also be made available to the public.

Access to Information

Information requirements in an approval and information required under the Code of Practice can be made available to the public.

Verifiable Progress

Facilities under approval are required to submit an annual report outlining facility performance with respect to approval conditions. This includes submitting mercury stack testing results and comparison to the CWS. Small facilities under a Code of Practice are required to keep records of waste incinerated for audit by Alberta Environment. This process will be used to verify achievement of the CWS by Alberta Environment.

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