



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

JAN 20 2011

OFFICE OF  
WATER

Amey Marella  
Commissioner  
Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection  
79 Elm Street  
Hartford, CT 06106-5127

Dear Commissioner Marella:

Thank you for your November 29, 2010, letter to the Administrator regarding follow up to the Clean Water Act Section 319(g) Management Conference last June. We are pleased that you or your representatives were able to participate in the conference, and that you found the conference informative.

We agree that mercury contamination of the nation's waters is a serious issue and maintain our commitment to addressing such contamination. As indicated in many mercury TMDLs, such as the Northeast Regional Mercury TMDL, the predominant source of mercury is air deposition. Accordingly, reductions in air sources are necessary in order to make progress toward water quality goals.

We appreciate your recommendations to EPA regarding activities to reduce mercury releases. The Agency has a number of actions underway to reduce mercury loadings to water, including many of the actions identified in your letter. For example, in 2010, we promulgated final Maximum Achievable Control Technology (MACT) standards for gold ore processing and production facilities, as well as for the Portland cement manufacturing sector. The Agency has proposed or has under development standards for a number of other sectors, including coal-fired electric utilities, industrial/commercial boilers, and sewage sludge incinerators, among others. We are moving forward to develop a regulation to require dental amalgam separators and expect to propose a rule this year. In the meantime, we encourage the voluntary installation of dental amalgam separators. While we may not yet know what the final levels of reductions will be in each of these standards, we expect that collectively they will result in greatly reduced mercury releases to the environment, including water.

In the area of product stewardship, EPA is working to reduce or eliminate the use of mercury in products in domestic and international capacities, as well as to promote mercury recovery and recycling where appropriate. Domestically, EPA is pursuing regulatory options under the Toxic Substances Control Act, as well as voluntary measures, to address a variety of mercury-containing products. Regulatory measures range from notification requirements applicable to potential new uses of obsolete products to prohibitions or limits on the use of mercury in products that are actively manufactured, processed, and sold.

Internationally, EPA has been taking a leadership role, including leading the Mercury-Containing Products Partnership, one of a number of partnerships under the United Nations Environment Program's Global Mercury Partnership. EPA also provides technical assistance to the U.S. delegation in the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee that is deliberating a legally binding instrument to address global mercury issues.

The areas mentioned above represent a few brief highlights of the Agency's current activities to reduce mercury sources. The EPA Mercury Roadmap provided a comprehensive, multi-media and multi-program description of EPA's current and planned mercury activities as of 2006. Although the Agency does not plan to produce updates of that document, the latest information on the Agency's domestic and international mercury activities can be found on our mercury website: [www.epa.gov/mercury](http://www.epa.gov/mercury). We will also continue to provide periodic updates on key EPA mercury activities to state agencies and associations that participate in the Quicksilver Caucus.

States have played an important role in reducing mercury releases, with many states on the forefront in developing strong mercury reduction programs as highlighted at the 319(g) conference. We appreciate the dialogue with states at the 319(g) conference, as well as the ongoing dialogue through the Quicksilver Caucus. Through our continuing dialogue with states, we will be considering many of the issues raised at the 319(g) conference as highlighted in your letter. We encourage states to be active participants and work with us in partnership as we develop regulatory and other programs to reduce mercury.

Sincerely,



Tom Wall  
Acting Director  
Assessment and Watershed Protection  
Division

cc: Beth Card, New England Interstate Water  
Pollution Control Commission  
Robert Brenner, Office of Air and Radiation  
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