

DRAFT For Review – April 19, 2007

QUICKSILVER CAUCUS (QSC) PRINCIPLES FOR MANAGEMENT OF ELEMENTAL MERCURY

These guiding principles were developed by the QSC. The QSC encompasses the environmental position on mercury from the Environmental Council of States, the National Governor's Association and state associations representing air, water, waste and pollution prevention. These principles were assembled to facilitate development of comprehensive and effective activities including consideration in Federal and state legislation, state and national regulations/policies in the United States and international agreements and or regulations/policies for improved management of elemental mercury in an environmentally secure manner. These principles include:

- 1) The manufacture and sale of non-essential uses of mercury-added products should be phased out in the long-term. Several mercury-added products can be phased-out in the next three to five years including most uses of thermometers, thermostats, switches, relays and novelty items.
- 2) The best opportunities for achieving this goal will be to aggressively pursue multi-stakeholder partnerships, educate consumers and businesses and leverage federal and state environmental laws and regulations to accelerate such a reduction.
- 3) Reuse of elemental mercury should only be utilized in processes or products deemed essential. Few essential uses remain, but include fluorescent and compact fluorescent lamps and perhaps a select few scientific pieces of equipment. Research should be supported to find safe alternatives to elemental mercury in those products deemed essential.
- 4) Research should also be conducted on the use and export of mercury compounds and in finding safe alternatives, including such mercury compounds as mercuric chloride and mercuric oxide.
- 5) States and the federal government should continue to work with chlor-alkali manufacturers on phasing out the use of the "mercury cell" manufacturing process.
- 6) Following the collection and recycling (retorting) of used mercury-containing products, the mercury should be sequestered and safely stored within the United States.
- 7) The United States should support mechanisms to better track international trade of mercury. The United States should be a leader in proper use and management of elemental mercury. Exporting surplus elemental mercury to developing countries where it can result in unsafe exposure should be prohibited. Export of surplus elemental mercury should only be exported to other countries for essential uses.
- 8) The United States should also be a leader by not exporting any mercury-containing products to other countries unless it is related to an essential use.
- 9) The United States should prohibit imports of environmental mercury and mercury-containing products.

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- 10) Until a safe disposal technique is developed, temporary storage of elemental mercury should be in a safe, secure, continuously monitored location. Industries that generate significant amounts of elemental mercury should be responsible for the storage of their own mercury until a long-term solution in the United States is identified and implemented.
- 11) The United States should assist other countries in phasing out uses and applications of mercury and help them identify safe storage techniques to use for their mercury stockpiles.
- 12) The USEPA and states need to work together to track changes in the use of mercury-added products to measure the sources and amount of mercury that is collected. This needs to be correlated with monitoring the releases of mercury to air and water.
- 13) The Congress or the President should establish a National Advisory Committee to develop a comprehensive report that incorporates the principles set forth in this document and make recommendations for action by governments, industry, academia, and citizens and a time table for doing so.