



City of Chicago  
Richard M. Daley, Mayor

Department of Environment

Sadhu A. Johnston  
Commissioner

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June 12, 2006

Illinois Pollution Control Board  
James Thompson Center  
100 W. Randolph, Suite 11-500  
Chicago, Illinois 60601

RECEIVED  
CLERK'S OFFICE

JUN 12 2006

STATE OF ILLINOIS  
Pollution Control Board

RE: PROPOSED IEPA MERCURY EMISSIONS REDUCTION RULE

PC# 6232

Dear IPCB Commissioners:

I am writing in support of the efforts of Governor Blagojevich and the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA) to reduce mercury emissions from coal-fired power plants in the state by ninety percent (90%) by June 30, 2009.

Each year, coal-fired power plants and other industrial facilities emit tons of mercury into the air. This pollution settles into our rivers and waterways and gradually accumulates in fish. Eating fish contaminated with mercury, a poison that interferes with the brain and nervous system, can cause serious health problems, especially for children and pregnant women.

A July 2005 report from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) concluded that many women of child bearing age have mercury in their blood at levels that could pose a risk to developing fetuses. Illinois Department of Public Health has issued advisories warning people to limit their consumption of fish caught in lake Michigan and other rivers in the state. As a result many people are hesitant to eat fish at all, thereby depriving themselves of a major source of nutrients.

Since coal-fired plants in Illinois are the single largest stationary source of mercury emissions, more than all other human activity combined, reducing their emissions would reduce our citizens' risk of mercury contamination. Fortunately, there are affordable and readily available technologies that can capture and reduce mercury emissions.

So, on behalf of the city of Chicago, and for the sake of the entire citizenry of the state, I hereby urge you to seize this opportunity to reduce the dangers posed by mercury contamination by approving the new IEPA mercury rule.

Sincerely,

Sadhu A. Johnston  
Commissioner

