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MAY - 3 2006

STATE OF ILLINOIS
Pollution Control Board

May 1, 2006

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

Attention: Mercury Docket Rule

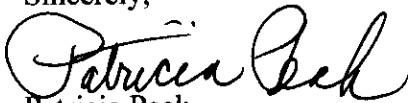
R06-25
PC#294

I urge members of the Ill. Pollution Control Board to approve the Governor's proposal to limit mercury emissions from coal fired plants to an average of 90% for each company by 2009. I also support the provision to disallow mercury credit trading, since Southern Illinois and the Chicago area are already "hotspots" for mercury pollution. Six of the top 15 lakes and streams on the restricted mercury advisory are in southernmost Illinois.

Studies done in Mass., where mercury emissions have been greatly reduced, have shown that mercury levels in fish are lowered when mercury pollution from coal burning is decreased. The latest nationwide study done by Sierra Club indicates that as many as 1 out of 4 women of child bearing age have so much mercury in their bodies that their children are in danger of birth defects, mental retardation and learning disabilities. In addition, high mercury levels have been associated with an increased number of heart attacks in adults.

Wildlife is also affected by mercury at levels less than half the level shown to affect humans, resulting in less success in spawning, nesting and survival to adulthood. Besides the warnings to limit consumption of predator fish, hunters are now being warned to limit consumption of wild ducks. Our family does not even feel free to enjoy eating fish from our backyard lake as much as we used to because it is reasonable to assume that the bass and crappie and cat fish have high concentrations of mercury, since all around us are reports of highly polluted fish with mercury. The technology to capture 90% of the mercury from burning coal is already available and cost effective. I am certainly willing to pay the estimated \$1.50 per month to protect Illinois' children, adults and wildlife from mercury pollution.

Sincerely,


Patricia Peak