April/May 2003

UPDATES ON MERCURY IN THE AIR PROGRAM

ELECTRIC UTILITIES

* Utilities are the largest remaining unregulated source of air emissions of mercury, emitting about 48 tons/year.

* **Maximum achievable control technology (MACT) standard**
http://www.epa.gov/ttn/atw/combust/utiltox/utoxpg.html

- This standard would have facility-specific control requirements, developed under the authority of section 112 of the Clean Air Act.
- Public outreach has included a public meeting in June 2000, and stakeholder meetings in March 2001. A Working Group was formed under the Clean Air Act Advisory Committee, with representatives from industry, environmental organizations, and State/local/tribal agencies. The group discussed issues and stakeholder positions, included in a final report in October 2002.
- A standard will be proposed by December 2003, and finalized by December 2004, unless the Clean Air Act is amended through Clear Skies legislation to remove the authority for MACT.

* **Clear Skies Act of 2003** http://www.epa.gov/clearskies/

- This is a multi-pollutant approach to reducing emissions from power plants. It would cap total national emissions of sulfur dioxide (SO2), nitrogen oxides (NOx) and mercury emissions from utilities. The proposed mercury cap is 26 tons in 2010, and 15 tons in 2018. The approach would authorize trading and banking of emissions allowances.
- The caps would reduce emissions from these sources by about 70 percent from current levels.
- The Act was submitted to both Houses of Congress on February 27. The Administrator testified before the Senate Environment and Public Works Clean Air Subcommittee on April 8.

MERCURY CELL CHLOR-ALKALI PLANTS

* The proposed MACT rule was published in the Federal Register in July 2002. The comment period closed in October. The expected date for the final rule is August 2003.
* The rule would reduce mercury emissions to 545 pounds/year (0.27 tons/year). This represents a reduction of 73 percent, or 1500 pounds/year (0.75 tons/year) from current levels.

MUNICIPAL WASTE COMBUSTORS AND MEDICAL WASTE INCINERATORS

* These rules are being implemented, and they are reducing mercury emissions from these sources by greater than 90 percent from 1990 levels.

MORE INFORMATION about air toxics, including mercury, can be found at the air toxics website: http://www.epa.gov/ttn/atw/