



## Stop the Weakening of Mercury Pollution Protections

*The US Environmental Protection Agency's Mercury and Air Toxics Standards, finalized in 2011, placed the first-ever national limits on the amount of mercury, heavy metals, and other toxic air pollution that coal- and oil-burning power plants can emit. Coal-fired power plants were the largest source of these pollutants before the standards went into effect.*

*These common-sense limits are estimated to save up to 11,000 lives each year and protect Mainers from mercury's harmful impacts on our air, food, and water. But the Trump Administration wants to roll back these protections against toxic mercury pollution, ignoring the dangers it poses to the health of people and our environment.*

### **Mercury is a Threat to the Health of Mainers**

Coal-fired power plants are the biggest source of airborne mercury, accounting for nearly 70 percent of the mercury American people and wildlife are exposed to everyday. Mercury exposure is particularly damaging to the developing brains of infants and children, and causes severe health problems such as cardiovascular disease and neurological damage.

Maine's people and environment face higher-than-average rates of mercury pollution because winds carry the pollution from coal plants in the Midwest into Maine. The Maine Center for Disease Control & Prevention has warned Mainers—especially pregnant woman, nursing mothers, and kids under eight—to avoid eating freshwater fish caught in our thousands of lakes and ponds. Mercury levels in Maine fish, loons, and eagles are among the highest in the country.



### **Protections against Mercury Pollution are Working**

Since the standards went into effect in 2011, power plants have reduced their mercury emissions by nearly 82 percent nationwide, according to the Center for American Progress. The power industry has already invested more than \$18 billion to reduce these deadly pollutants and are meeting the standards set by EPA.

## Mercury Standards Have Widespread Support

Support for these standards is widespread and diverse. When EPA proposed the rule, they received more than 900,000 public comments in support of the standards, and even the power industry is opposed to rolling back the mercury pollution protections. Due to the investments they've already made to meet the standards, industry groups have urged EPA to leave the Mercury and Air Toxics Standards in place.

Maine's Congressional delegation supports these standards, and Maine's U.S. Senator Susan Collins has been a leader on legislation to address the problem of mercury pollution, acknowledging that this is one of the most persistent and dangerous pollutants that threatens our health and environment.

## Take Action to Keep These Standards in Place.

Mercury pollution is a grave threat to human health and jeopardizes the clean air and healthy environment that Maine communities, businesses, and families rely on.

**Keep updated and take action** at [www.nrcm.org/take-action](http://www.nrcm.org/take-action).



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