

IMERC INTERSTATE MERCURY EDUCATION & REDUCTION CLEARINGHOUSE

Reducing mercury in products by:

- Fostering collaboration and information sharing
- Supporting implementation of state mercury reduction laws
- Managing and analyzing data
- Harmonizing policies and programs

Starting in 1999 the states in the Northeast and other parts of the country actively began to pursue enactment of legislation focused on reducing mercury in products and waste. In 2001, the Northeast Waste Management Officials' Association (NEWMOA) launched the Interstate Mercury Education and Reduction Clearinghouse (IMERC) to provide:

- *ongoing technical and programmatic assistance to states that have enacted mercury education and reduction legislation*
- *a single point of contact for industry and the public for information on mercury-added products and member states' mercury education and reduction programs*

Activities

IMERC facilitates deliberations that provide advice and assistance to the individual states for their decision-making. The Clearinghouse:

- Collects and manages data submitted by manufacturers of mercury-added products to implement notification provisions of state mercury reduction legislation
- Facilitates interstate collaboration on the development and implementation of public education and outreach programs on mercury-added products
- Makes information on mercury-added products available to industry and the public
- Responds to information requests for information on mercury-added products, the requirements of the member states, and the status of state implementation of their laws
- Provides technical assistance and facilitates member reviews concerning manufacturers' applications for labeling of and exemptions to the phase-out of mercury-added products and manufacturers' plans for collection and proper waste management of mercury-containing materials

Structure

IMERC's membership consists of state government agencies, including:

- Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection
- Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality
- Maine Department of Environmental Protection
- Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection
- Michigan Department of Environmental Quality
- Minnesota Pollution Control Agency
- New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services
- New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection
- New York State Department of Environmental Conservation
- North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources
- Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management
- Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation
- Washington Department of Ecology

All of the members pay annual dues and have a vote on the recommendations made by the Clearinghouse. All of the state representatives to IMERC are appointed by the responsible state agency commissioner/director.

IMERC launched a supporting membership option in October 2016. Supporting Members strengthen IMERC's ability to fulfill its mission to help states implement laws and programs aimed at getting mercury out of products, the waste stream, and the environment. IMERC invites manufacturers, distributors, and importers of mercury-added products; trade associations; non-governmental organizations (NGOs); and other interested parties to join. **For information about the benefits of supporting membership and a list of the current Members, visit:** www.newmoa.org/prevention/mercury/imerc/supportingmembers.cfm.



NEWMOA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

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IMERC's Steering Committee consists of at least one representative from each member state. This group oversees all of IMERC's activities and discusses policy and programmatic directions. IMERC's Workgroups focus on requirements that states have enacted, including:

- A **Mercury-added Product Notification Workgroup** that coordinates state reporting requirements by manufacturers, manages a single point of contact for submitting Notification Forms, and facilitates interstate review
- A **Mercury-added Product Labeling Workgroup** that coordinates state mandatory product labeling programs to help ensure consistency
- **Mercury-added Product Phase-out Workgroup** that coordinates state reviews of Mercury-added Product Phase-out Exemption Applications
- A **Mercury-added Product Education & Outreach Workgroup** that coordinates education and outreach efforts related to the use of mercury in products.

NEWMOA's staff provides logistical, facilitation, and technical support for IMERC.

“Since its inception, IMERC has provided consistency among state mercury programs and more efficient and effective communications with the regulated community.”

Gary Gulka
Chief, Assistance & Prevention
Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation

Information Resources

IMERC's Mercury-added Products Database (www.newmoa.org/prevention/mercury/imerc/notification/index.cfm) presents information submitted through IMERC on the amount and purpose of mercury in consumer products. The Database is intended to inform consumers, manufacturers, and others about:

- Manufacturers of mercury-added products
- Products that contain intentionally-added mercury
- Mercury content in products
- Total mercury used in product lines sold in the US every three years

Manufacturers and importers submit their mercury-added product data through IMERC's electronic reporting system to



comply with laws in the IMERC-member states listed above. The state notification requirements have been in effect for products manufactured or distributed in the participating states beginning in January 2001.

The online Mercury-Added Products Database, allows for public access to the data. After submission, the IMERC Notification Committee reviews the product notification. Following approval by the Committee, the information is posted to the online Database.

IMERC periodically publishes *IMERC Alert* (www.newmoa.org/prevention/mercury/imerc/alert/), an electronic bulletin that informs manufacturers and distributors of mercury-added products and their consultants, lawyers, and trade associations about new requirements and key deadlines.

IMERC publishes guidance (www.newmoa.org/prevention/mercury/imerc/guidance.cfm) for the regulated community on compliance with state mercury reduction laws.

IMERC periodically publishes fact sheets and reports that summarize information in the Mercury-added Products Database for targeted product categories (<http://www.newmoa.org/prevention/mercury/imerc/pubs/index.cfm>) and trends in mercury use in products.

IMERC staff is available to address questions about state mercury reduction laws and requirements.

For more information contact: imerc@newmoa.org; (617) 367-8558.

“Joining IMERC has helped New Hampshire tremendously with its implementation of state mercury products laws. IMERC provides coordination, staff support, record keeping, data analysis, and myriad other benefits that would otherwise need to be undertaken by state staff. IMERC membership is an excellent investment, which more than pays for itself.”

Stephanie D'Agostino
Supervisor, Pollution Prevention Section
New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services

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