

FISCAL YEAR 2007 PROJECT Persistent, Bioaccumulative, & Toxics (PBT) & Other Priority Chemicals

Lamp Recycling Outreach Project

Project Strategy: Increase the recycling of mercury-containing lamps in the Northeast states and identify effective outreach approaches that increase lamp recycling from businesses.

Fluorescent and high-intensity discharge (e.g., mercury vapor, metal halide, high pressure sodium) lamps contain mercury. All NEWMOA states have universal waste rules, which cover some if not all mercury-containing lamps. Mercury-containing lamps (that are determined to be universal waste based on state regulations) must be either recycled or disposed of as hazardous waste. Currently only approximately 20 percent of mercury-containing lamps are being recycled in the northeast. This low recycling rate is due to many factors, including low awareness of the need to recycle lamps, minimal enforcement, and the perception that lamp recycling is not convenient for small businesses.

In 2004 with EPA funding, NEWMOA initiated a project to double the recycling rate of lamps by educating people about the need to recycle and the options available for recycling. To achieve this goal, NEWMOA established and coordinated a Lamp Recycling Outreach Workgroup, developed outreach tools for the states to use, and piloted specific approaches to target audiences. In the first year of the project, the Workgroup focused on encouraging electrical distributors to set up reverse distribution, or lamp take back programs, to increase available options for recycling lamps. It convened three sub-regional meetings with electrical distributors, recyclers, and EPA Regions 1 and 2. The specific goals of the meetings were to educate distributors about the states' lamp management requirements, encourage them to develop lamp take back programs for their customers, and stimulate business to business dialogue between the distributors and the recyclers. In the second and third years of the project, NEWMOA focused on outreach to property managers and tanning salon operators, and researched the use of mercury lighting at municipal wastewater and drinking water facilities. NEWMOA also completed an analysis of the lamp data in the Mercury-added Products Database and published a briefing paper on Mercury Use in Lighting.

In FY 2007, NEWMOA will evaluate its work on the project, including assessing regional recycling rates, and continue to coordinate state lamp recycling activities through periodic conference calls and email exchanges.

For more information visit www.newmoa.org/prevention/mercury/lamprecycle/ or contact: Meg Wilcox, NEWMOA, (617)367-8558 x305; mwilcox@newmoa.org.