

FISCAL YEAR 2009 PROJECT Persistent, Bioaccumulative, & Toxics (PBT) & Other Priority Chemicals

Mercury Science & Policy Conference

Project Strategy: Convene governmental officials, scientists, industry representatives, and individuals from non-governmental organizations during a two-day conference to discuss and vet the latest scientific research pertaining to mercury.

Over the past decade, government agencies and others in the Northeast and Great Lakes regions, in addition to EPA, have been vigorously working to reduce mercury releases and minimize human exposure. Despite some impressive achievements, much work remains to achieve the virtual elimination goal for anthropogenic sources of mercury in both regions. To effectively reduce human exposure, it is critical to understand the sources of anthropogenic mercury, as well as how the pollutant is transported through and deposited in the environment. While much research has helped shed light on these critical issues, knowledge gaps remain.

The primary objectives of the 2009 Mercury Science & Policy Conference are to (1) provide current information on human health, environmental, and ecological research pertaining to mercury in addition to associated policy activities, (2) provide a forum for evaluating advancements in reducing mercury releases and for continuing discussion on the scientific and public health basis for policy actions to effectively address mercury risks, (3) bring together state and federal staff from the air, water, and waste programs for a cross-media exchange on the technical, policy, and management issues pertaining to mercury, and (4) identify high priority areas for future cost effective mercury reduction activities and strategies.

NEWMOA anticipates that the conference will lead to 1) greater understanding of what has been achieved in mercury reduction in the Great Lakes and Northeast regions, 2) identification of the remaining challenges and opportunities for further mercury reduction, 3) identification of governmental and non-governmental strategies and actions that are having a significant impact and that could be replicated, and 4) identification of opportunities for improved cooperation and coordination between the Great Lakes and the Northeast regions.

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For more information contact: Terri Goldberg, NEWMOA, (617) 367-8558 x302;
tgoldberg@newmoa.org.