Proposal to Reduce Mercury Emissions from the Power Sector

Proposed Alternatives to Reduce Mercury Emissions from the Power Sector

- Proposed Section 112 MACT requirements for utility units
  - Reduces mercury emissions from 48 to 34 tons by 2007
- Proposed rule to address mercury from power sector under Section 111 (revising December 2000 determination to use Section 112 MACT requirements)
  - Caps mercury emissions at 15 tons after 2018, down from 48 tons currently
- Proposed cap-and-trade approach [under Section 112(n)(1)(A)]

Proposed Section 111 Alternative

- Federal rule for new sources – 111(b)
  - Includes *new* utility emission limits for mercury and nickel

- Guidelines for State Implementation Plans – 111(d)

  - Sets emission rates for *existing* coal-fired utility units under a cap-and-trade program administered by States
    - Phase 1: 2010 (solicit comment on cap level)
    - Phase 2: 2018 Capped at 15 tons

  - Sets a limit for nickel emissions from oil-fired units to ensure adequate control in State plans

Benefits of Proposed Section 111 Alternative

- Would reduce nationwide mercury emissions by 33 tons (69 percent) from today's levels when fully implemented after 2018.

- Potential for earlier and greater reductions than proposed MACT alternative.

Perspective on Approach

- Administration prefers Clear Skies
  - Provides substantial health and environmental benefits with certainty, less complexity, and reasonable economic impacts
- However, the Interstate Air Quality & Utility Mercury Rules will:
  - Deliver many health and environmental benefits for reasonable costs.
  - Significantly help cities and states in the East meet new, more stringent national ambient air quality standards for ozone and fine particles.
  - Serve as the most important steps EPA can take now to improve air quality.
  - Address major power sector emissions in an integrated manner.

Summary

The Interstate Air Quality Rule and Mercury Rules will significantly cut emissions of sulfur dioxide, nitrogen oxides and mercury from coal-burning power plants.

These rules will:

- Provide the largest single investment in any clean air program in history
- Significantly help cities and states in the East meet new, more stringent national ambient air quality standards for ozone and fine particles
- Achieve the largest reduction in air pollution in more than a decade (since the highly successful acid rain program)
- Serve as the single most important step we can take now to improve air quality in the U.S.

To Learn More…

- Interstate Air Quality Rule
  - **Website:** www.epa.gov/interstateairquality
  - **Docket no.** OAR-2003-0053
    (Electronic docket: www.epa.gov/edocket)

- Utility Mercury Reductions Rule
  - **Website:** www.epa.gov/mercury
  - **Docket no.** OAR-2003-0056
    (Electronic docket: www.epa.gov/edocket)