

US EPA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT

Here's How Your Local Government Can Switch on a New Green Program

Here's a great way local governments can **help improve the environment**. By encouraging your local scrap vehicle dismantlers to earn money by removing mercury switches from scrapped cars, you can contribute to cleaner air and cleaner water.

What is the National Vehicle Mercury Switch Recovery Program?

The National Vehicle Mercury Switch Recovery Program (NVMSRP) is a voluntary program that reduces mercury releases into the environment early in the scrap vehicle recycling process. This is important, because U.S. steelmakers recycle more than 14 million tons of steel from scrap vehicles each year.

Why is Mercury Switch Recovery Important?

Mercury emitted into the air can deposit locally or travel great distances before depositing. Once in the water, bacteria convert it to a more toxic form—methylmercury—which accumulates in fish. **People who eat the fish can be exposed to unhealthy amounts of methylmercury. Women of child-bearing age (due to potential damage to the fetus) and young children** are the most sensitive populations because methylmercury affects the developing nervous system.

Why Should Local Governments Promote this Program?

Many vehicle dismantlers are small businesses that are often difficult to identify and contact from a national or state level. **Local governments are much more likely to know about these small businesses and reach out to them with information about the NVMSRP.** It's a win-win situation: local governments can play an important role in protecting the environment by encouraging vehicle dismantlers to participate in this voluntary program and the vehicle dismantlers can earn money for each switch they recover.

How Does a Vehicle Dismantler Join the Program and What is Involved in Participating?

It's very easy for automobile dismantlers and scrap recyclers to join the NVMSRP by contacting the End of Life Vehicles Solutions, Inc. (ELVS). To join NVMSRP, the dismantler simply fills out ELVS' online contact form (<http://www.elvsolutions.org>) or calls, toll free, (877) 225-ELVS. **There is no cost to participate in the program.**

The NVMSRP encourages dismantlers to recover switches by providing educational materials and money (**\$4.00 for each convenience light switch and \$6.00 for each anti-lock brake system that contains mercury switches**). Collection buckets are provided and shipping costs are covered by ELVS.

Would You Like Additional Information?

For more details about the program, visit www.epa.gov/mercury/switch.htm. If you have questions, contact **Rhonda Minnick** (minnick.rhonda@epa.gov, 703-308-8771) or **Denise Ney** (ney.denise@epa.gov, 202-564-3684).