

Mercury Emission Reduction Strategy Development Process and Team Structure

Background:

In May 2004, President Bush create a cabinet-level interagency task force call for a “regional collaboration of national significance.” In response the federal [Great Lakes Interagency Task Force](#), the [Council of Great Lakes Governors](#), the [Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative](#), Great Lakes tribes (represented by the [Great Lakes Indian Fish and Wildlife Commission](#)) and the [Great Lakes Congressional Task Force](#) moved to convene a group now known as the Great Lakes Regional Collaboration (GLRC).

The GLRC Collaboration created a [Strategy to Restore and Protect the Great Lakes](#) which was released on December 12, 2005. The strategy consists of 5 initiatives that focus on invasive species, toxic pollutants, wetlands, beaches and botulism. In March 2007 the Toxic Pollutants Initiative of the Great Lakes Regional Collaboration (GLRC) released recommendations to restore the Great Lakes with regard to toxic pollutants. The Toxic Pollutants Initiative calls for the creation of a region-wide strategy to reduce mercury emissions. <http://glrc.us/initiatives/toxics/index.html>

Create region-wide strategy to reduce mercury emissions

A Great Lakes mercury emission reduction strategy would be developed in a manner similar to the Great Lakes mercury in products phase-down strategy. This effort should produce institutionalized activities to sustain mercury emissions reduction from new and existing sources whose mercury emissions have not been regulated, and from sources where regulations have been implemented but additional reductions are technically feasible and economically reasonable. Examples of potential sources include manufacturing processes that produce mercury emissions, and the disposal of mercury-containing products.

The strategy would be drafted by a group that includes staff from each of the Great Lakes states, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and interested tribes and cities. This group would solicit input from stakeholders on an ongoing basis using the existing Great Lakes Binational Toxics Strategy mercury workgroup.

The strategy should acknowledge existing work within the region among various agencies and organizations (states, municipalities, tribes, universities, etc.). Where consensus exists among the group, the strategy should include specific recommendations for action by appropriate levels of government and the stakeholder community, whether through legislation, regulation, permits, or voluntary approaches. Where consensus is not possible, it should list the available options for reducing emissions from a sector. The strategy should also include a reference table and summary of existing and planned actions to reduce mercury emissions.

Mission:

Write a basin wide strategy to reduce mercury emissions in the Great Lakes region. This effort should produce institutionalized activities to sustain mercury emission reductions.

The Great Lakes Mercury Emission Reduction Strategy Team was established based on recommendations within the Great Lakes Regional Collaboration Strategy released in December 2005.

Team:

In November 2008 Executive Director of the Council of Great Lakes Governors sent a letter to each of the Great Lakes state environmental directors requesting them to designate a representative to serve on the team. A

similar letter was sent to the Great Lakes tribes. Additional efforts to involve representatives from the tribes were led by the Strategy Team Coordinator.

Two teams were formed, one consisting primarily of state air program directors and management personnel (Management Team) and the other consisting of primarily technical and compliance experts from the state air programs within the state environmental regulatory agencies (Technical Team). The Management team is comprised of sixteen (16) individuals; the technical team is comprised of twenty-three (23) individuals. There is some overlap of participants, including EPA representatives and the team coordinator.

The team was initially convened on April 17, 2008. The team expects to submit the final Strategy to the GLRC in January 2010.

Process:

1. The Team met every three to four weeks via conference call, with weekly meetings during some periods.
2. Initial teleconference to discuss mission and goals. Consensus - The strategy should acknowledge existing work within the region among various agencies and organizations (states, municipalities, tribes, universities, etc.). Including specific recommendations that are actionable and measurable. The strategy should also include a reference table and summary of existing Great Lakes state legislation regulating mercury.
3. Developed a list of priority mercury emission source sectors
 - a. Prioritized and identify top emission source sectors to include in draft strategy.
 - b. Identify emission sectors for future work
4. Develop a draft strategy with the following elements.
5. Distribute for technical and public review, then revision.
6. Public release and implementation of recommendations by the tribal, state and local government agencies.

Structure of Strategy:

1. Executive Summary
2. Goals
3. Introduction
4. Background
5. Criteria for Selecting Emission Source Sectors
6. Emission Sector Write-ups
 - a. Background
 - i. Process that emits mercury
 - ii. Sector emissions nationally and within the Great Lakes
 - iii. Control approaches
 - b. Existing & Prospective Federal Regulation
 - c. Existing and Prospective State Regulation
 - d. State & Federal Voluntary Programs Affecting Emissions
 - e. Recommendations for State Action
7. Crosscutting Strategies
8. Tracking Progress on Implementation
9. Conclusion

Process of Writing:

1. The Management and Technical Team developed the list of source sectors to be addressed in the Strategy. A document summarizing the criteria for source selection was written.
2. The Technical Team will begin to convene, on average, every two to three weeks to draft the each section of the document. During this time draft sections will be distributed to the team members who will then review and discuss the draft among experts and leaders within their respective state.
3. The draft document will be submitted to the Management Team for a two week review. A conference call with the Management Team, the Technical Team and the coordinators will be convened to review and discuss the draft document.
4. The draft document will be revised based on Management Team feedback. The revised draft will then be submitted to the state environmental directors for a 30-day review and sharing with the state Governor's office. At the same time the team will request approval to release the document for a 60-day public comment period.
5. Following the 60-day public comment period the comments will be reviewed by the Management and Technical Team. A conference call to discuss changes to the document will be convened.
6. The draft document will be revised based on public comments and the final document will be submitted to the GLRC Executive Committee. A "Response to Public Comment" document will be drafted and included with the final supporting document collection. This document will also be sent to individuals who submitted comments.

Review Process:

The draft outline and structure was distributed for a 30-day stakeholder review and feedback on the criteria and mercury emission source sectors that should be considered in the Strategy.

The Management Team will conduct a two-week review of the document. The document was revised based on their feedback.

The Strategy Team Coordinator, with support from the Council of Great Lakes Governors, will submit the final draft of the Great Lakes Mercury Emission Reduction Strategy to the state environmental agency directors for a 30-day review and discussion with the state Governor's office. At that same time, the Coordinator will request their "No objection to Distribution for Public Comment" of the document.

Upon approval from the state Governor's office, the document will be released for a 60-day public comment period.

The document will be revised based on public comments and the final document will be submitted to the GLRC Executive Committee.

Final Document:

The final Great Lakes Mercury Emission Reduction Strategy will be submitted to the Great Lakes Regional Collaboration Executive Committee for review and adoption.

ⁱ Rev. September 21, 2009