

Initial set of actions for the Mercury Canada-wide Standard for Dental Amalgam Waste

Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment

1. Coordinate the task of reporting on progress in a timely fashion and in a manner that reflects the intent under the Sub-agreement on Canada-wide Environmental Standards for an open and transparent process.

Alberta

1. Work with the Alberta Dental Association to determine how best to implement the standards in Alberta.

British Columbia

1. Work with the Association of Dental Surgeons of British Columbia and with BC local governments including the Capital Regional District to improve local sewer use control and management to reduce the release of dental amalgam and other wastes containing mercury to sewer systems.
2. In cooperation with Environment Canada and BC municipalities develop an annual inventory of mercury levels in BC municipal biosolids as an indicator of treatment plant influent mercury loading. Use biosolids mercury quality trends over time as an indication of the effectiveness of municipal sewer use control and management, and as a reference for estimating mercury releases to the environment from biosolids use and disposal.

Canada

1. Develop a Memorandum of Understanding between Environment Canada and the Canadian Dental Association to lay out the commitments by dentists to implement the standard, report annually to the federal government as per the Reporting Annex, and to promote the adoption of the CWS by all Canadian dentists. (As a backup, Canada will explore instruments under CEPA to achieve results equivalent to the Canada-wide Standard.)
2. In cooperation with provinces and interested associations, develop tools to aid municipalities in identifying and reducing sources of mercury discharges to sewers, and provide guidance and resource materials to municipalities across Canada.
3. Develop, in cooperation with the provinces/territories, an annual inventory of municipal sewage sludge quality as an indicator of treatment plant influent loading by mercury. Sludge quality trends may be used over time as an indication of the effectiveness of municipal sewer use control and management, and provide a reference for estimating mercury releases to the environment from sewage sludge use and disposal.

Manitoba

1. Work with the Association of Manitoba Municipalities and other stakeholders to develop a generic amendment to sewer use by-laws to reduce releases of dental amalgam and other wastes containing mercury to sewer systems.

New Brunswick

1. Will seek the development of an MOU with the New Brunswick Dental Association aimed at the reduction of mercury releases from dental offices.

Newfoundland

1. Newfoundland will consider establishing a MOU with the Newfoundland Dental Association to reduce mercury emissions from dental amalgam.

Northwest Territories

1. Seek to control mercury releases from dental amalgam under a biomedical waste guideline that is currently being drafted.

Nova Scotia

1. Continue to implement the Memorandum of Understanding with the Nova Scotia Dental Association including: a dental office audit guideline (including mercury); and a dental waste reduction program (including mercury).

Nunavut

1. Determine current practices with regard to amalgam waste disposal/collection in Nunavut.
2. Determine approximate quantities of amalgam waste generation in Nunavut.
3. Review the proposed MOU between Environment Canada and the Canadian Dental Association to determine applicability to Nunavut; if applicable, adopt the MOU.

Ontario

1. Work with the equipment suppliers and waste management companies in Toronto, to ensure they follow the provincial waste management guidelines/regulations when complying with the City's (proposed) sewer use by-law.
2. Continue discussions with Environment Canada (Ontario Region) and the Ontario Dental Association to finalize the "Best Management Practices" document, with the inclusion of amalgam separators consistent with the CWS.

Prince Edward Island

1. Establish a Memorandum of Understanding with the Dental Association of Prince Edward Island to implement the principles of pollution prevention among association members.

Saskatchewan

1. Examine opportunities to streamline waste management regulatory requirements to facilitate amalgam collection and recycling from Saskatchewan based sources.
2. Aid in the management of mercury analytical data for sewage sludge from provincial sources as an indicator of progress in implementation of dental amalgam best management practices.

Yukon

1. Conduct a survey of dental clinics in the Yukon to determine their current standard of amalgam collection and estimate the amount of mercury being released through the sewer systems.
2. Prepare an education and awareness program to make the dentists aware of the problems with dental amalgam; and
3. Negotiate a Memorandum of Understanding with Yukon dentists for voluntary action to reduce amalgam discharges.