



MAKE THE CLEAN AIR PROMISE: REDUCING MERCURY POLLUTION (BOILER MACT RULE)

Clean air programs have provided strong public health protections that have saved hundreds of thousands of American lives and prevented countless asthma attacks, heart attacks, and early deaths. But industry lobbyists are working to roll back public health protections provided by clean air protections – essentially sentencing thousands of Americans to death, forcing hundreds of thousands of children to fight for every breath they take, and exposing unborn babies to levels of mercury that will make it impossible for them to lead normal lives.

Make no mistake: rolling back clean air and public health protections through lethal legislation or irresponsible obstruction is an attack on the health of our families and communities. The stuff coming out of the smokestacks at power plants is ugly, dangerous poison that needs to be cleaned up before it lands in our backyards, on school grounds or playgrounds, and in the lungs of our children.

Industry leaders don't care how hard it is for your kids to breathe; they only care about their bottom line. But for us, the bottom line is the health and safety of our kids. We need to keep the promise we made to future generations and protect the clean air and public health policies that work for our families and protect our kids. We need to do everything we can to reduce harmful air pollution from toxics like mercury and arsenic and other pollutants like carbon and ozone, and oppose the big polluters who say our kids aren't worth the cost of reducing these dangerous emissions.

THAT'S WHY WE'RE ASKING EVERYONE TO MAKE THE CLEAN AIR PROMISE

The good news is that scientists know that cleaning up the air makes a difference. Reducing air pollution can help protect children from asthma attacks and other respiratory illnesses.

That's why we're asking community, business, and government leaders to make the clean air promise and protect clean air standards – because only they have the power to stand up for the most vulnerable members of our communities.

"I promise to protect America's children and families from dangerous air pollution. Toxics and pollutants such as mercury, smog, carbon, and soot cause thousands of hospital visits, asthma attacks, and even deaths. I will support clean air policies and other protections that scientists and public health experts have recommended to the EPA to safeguard our air quality."

THE PROMISE: REDUCE MERCURY POLLUTION FROM CHEMICAL PLANTS AND INDUSTRIAL FACILITIES

- In [February of 2011](#), the EPA proposed a critical air quality standard to protect Americans against life-threatening air pollution such as mercury, soot, dioxin, lead, and nitrogen dioxide emitted by refineries, chemical plants, solid waste and sewage sludge incinerators, and other industrial facilities.
- This long overdue and [critically important update](#) to Clean Air Act standards is an important public health safeguard that will prevent as many as 2,600 premature deaths, 4,100 heart attacks, and 42,000 asthma attacks a year.
- In addition to mercury, the soot, dioxin, lead, and nitrogen dioxide emitted by these industrial facilities threaten public health. Even in small amounts [these pollutants](#) are linked to cancer, heart disease, birth defects, asthma attacks and premature death.

- Mercury, which is a [potent neurotoxin](#) that is especially dangerous to children and pregnant women, is a particularly harmful pollutant because it builds up in the environment and the food we eat. Mercury exposure affects a child's ability to walk, talk, read, write and learn.
- The mercury contamination problem in the U.S. is so widespread that as many as [one in six](#) women of childbearing age is likely to have mercury levels in her blood high enough to put her baby at risk for mercury poisoning.
- For every dollar spent to reduce pollution from power plants, we get [\\$10 to \\$24 in health benefits](#). The EPA needs to stand its ground and move forward with the strongest air toxics protections possible to defend public health and protect children from toxic mercury.