

# Protect Our Air from Toxins

Updates to EPA  
Mercury Rules



March 2022  
Montana Environmental Information Center

# 2012 EPA adopts MATS

The science is indisputable. Mercury and other toxins are harmful to people and wildlife. The good news is that technology exists to limit these emissions to safer levels. The bad news is that regulations have not been consistent in the past few decades, especially at differing levels of government.

The federal 2012 Mercury and Air Toxics Standard (MATS) rule limits emissions of mercury as well as additional toxins such as hydrogen chloride, selenium, arsenic, chromium, cobalt, nickel, hydrogen cyanide, beryllium, and cadmium.



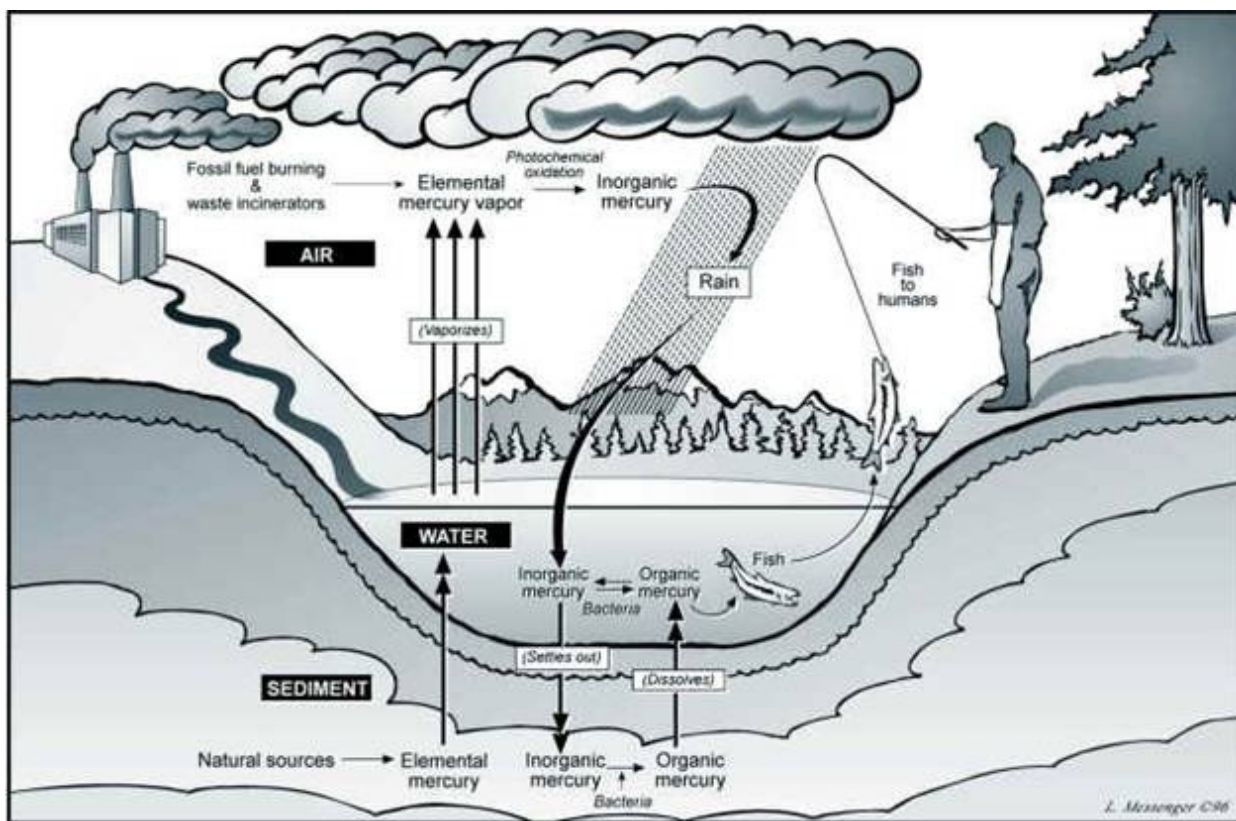
"APPROPRIATE AND NECESSARY"

# Trump EPA reverses MATS 2020

Under the Trump Administration, EPA said that it was no longer "appropriate and necessary" to limit mercury and other toxic emissions from coal plants and that the cost to clean up the air was too high for the polluting industries to have to pay. In making this decision, EPA eliminated the legal underpinnings of the MATS rule for coal-fired power plants, despite the fact that power plants across the U.S. had already installed the needed pollution control technology and were meeting the MATS emissions limits.

# 2022 EPA reinstates MATS

In January 2022, EPA finally released draft rules to reinstate the decision that it is “appropriate and necessary” to limit mercury and air toxics from power plants. EPA is asking for public input on ways to strengthen the MATS rule. EPA will accept public comments until April 11. You can comment on these proposed rules by going to [www.meic.org/action-center](http://www.meic.org/action-center).



## COMMENT NOW

It is important to note that re-establishing that it is “appropriate and necessary” to limit toxic pollutants is not enough to protect public health and the environment. Both the Montana rule and EPA’s MATS rule need to be improved. Power plants should limit their air pollution all day, every day, regardless of whether they are just starting up or are shutting down operations. The plant owners should not be allowed to impose the costs of that pollution on society in the form of increased cancer, cardiovascular disease, heart attacks, and neurological impairment.

[WWW.MEIC.ORG/ACTION-CENTER](http://WWW.MEIC.ORG/ACTION-CENTER)