

Michigan plans to cut mercury emissions

April 19 2006

Michigan Gov. Jennifer Granholm has announced plans to reduce mercury emissions from coal-fired power plants by 90 percent in the next decade.

Granholm ordered state regulators to write and adopt new rules for the plants, the Detroit Free Press reported.

Michigan has 21 plants that use coal. In 1999, the coal-fired plants released 3,000 tons of mercury.

Mercury is believed to be harmful to human health with its effects most severe for children and pregnant women.

"Mercury poses a real and serious health concern for the people of Michigan," Granholm said. "We are ensuring that future generations can enjoy clean air and safe water."

Power companies were not enthusiastic about Granholm's proposal. Dan Bishop, a spokesman for Consumers Energy, said that no proven technology available now can deliver what Granholm wants.

"People are in agreement that there should be reductions," Bishop said. "But when we invest our customers' money we need proven technology."

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Citation: Michigan plans to cut mercury emissions (2006, April 19) retrieved 23 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2006-04-michigan-mercury-emissions.html>

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