

Auto, steel makers to fund mercury program

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U.S. steel and auto makers have agreed to a plan to remove light switches containing mercury from old cars and trucks before they are recycled.

Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Stephen Johnson told The Washington Post that keeping mercury from older cars out of the atmosphere will cut mercury pollution by 5 percent annually during the next 15 years.

U.S. auto makers stopped using mercury in light switches in 2002, nine years after foreign car makers made the change. But millions of old cars still contain mercury, which is released when cars are scrapped at junk yards.

Under the plan, both steel and auto industries will pay \$2 million to recover 4 million switches during the next three years, the Post said.

About 1.2 million cars are recycled in the United States every year.

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