**Comprehensive Mercury Announcement Toolkit**

*December 28, 2018*

**Mercury Standards Message Guidance**

**BACKGROUND**

On December 28, 2018, the Trump administration announced its intent to move forward with Wheeler’s Poison Plan, [an attack on the Mercury and Air Toxic Standards,](https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2018-12-28/mercury-limits-on-coal-plants-no-longer-appropriate-epa-says) that takes the first steps to roll back these lifesaving reductions in dangerous mercury, soot, and other toxic air pollutants released from coal- and oil-burning power plants. Wheeler’s scheme to increase toxic pollution that threatens our air, land, water, and wildlife is even opposed by industry – which is complying with the standards already.

**CORE MESSAGE**

President Trump and Acting EPA Administrator Andrew Wheeler are moving forward with a Poison Plan that attacks Americans’ health, targeting restrictions on dangerous mercury and toxic pollution from power plants. Wheeler’s Poison Plan threatens to boost levels of mercury, soot, and other hazardous pollution into our air, water, food, and communities. Mercury pollution is particularly hazardous, endangering pregnant women and their babies and causing severe brain damage to those exposed to it. Even the power industry, which has already invested more than $18 billion dollars in cleaning up these dangerous and deadly pollutants, opposes this reckless plan. Wheeler’s plan jeopardizes their multi-billion-dollar investments and threatens to force Americans to breathe more toxic air pollution. Wheeler is paying off big time for the big coal companies he once lobbied for, at a significant cost to public health.

**TALKING POINTS**

* Trump’s EPA announced that it is taking its first step to sabotage the Mercury and Air Toxic Standards, which are aimed at reducing dangerous levels of mercury, heavy metals, and other toxic air pollutants released from coal- and oil-burning power plants. Wheeler’s Poison Plan would have devastating health consequences for communities across the country, especially pregnant women and communities of color.
* This move comes on the seventh day of the Trump-led government shutdown, and only hours before the EPA will run out of funding. By forcing through his Poison Plan during a time when EPA will have fewer resources to protect the health of families across the country, Wheeler is putting our most vulnerable communities at an even greater risk.
* Rolling back these lifesaving protections would be particularly detrimental to the health of pregnant women, infants, and children, as mercury pollution has been linked with damage to the brain, to the nervous system, and to fetal development.
* The reality is that this rollback has no benefits for anyone and it will only harm Americans’ health and pocketbooks. The Mercury and Air Toxics Standards were projected by EPA to annually avoid:
	+ up to 11,000 premature deaths;
	+ nearly 5,000 heart attacks;
	+ 130,000 asthma attacks; and
	+ 5,700 hospital and emergency room visits.
* Industry IS OPPOSED to rolling back the mercury pollution protections. The power industry has invested more than $18 billion in cleaning up these dangerous and deadly pollutants and is already meeting the standards. Any additional costs associated with rolling back these standards will be passed onto consumers, according to an [industry letter](http://src.bna.com/Ajk) to EPA air chief Bill Wehrum urging the Trump administration to leave these health protections in place.
* If undermining mercury and toxic pollution protections is bad for our health and bad for business, then who does it benefit? Wheeler, Wehrum, and Trump must come clean and explain to the American people how and why this attack is being mounted.

**SAMPLE SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDANCE**

**TWITTER:**

* At the eleventh hour, @EPAAWheeler is trying to sneak a blatant attack on our health and safety by us. It won’t work. #PoisonPlan #ClimateFriday <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2018-12-28/mercury-limits-on-coal-plants-no-longer-appropriate-epa-says>
* The @EPA is set to shut down tonight, and @EPAAWheeler is trying to bury his latest attack on our health in the news cycle. We can’t let him get away with it. #PoisonPlan #ClimateFriday <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2018-12-28/mercury-limits-on-coal-plants-no-longer-appropriate-epa-says>
* .@EPAAWheeler just launched a monumental attack on our health – right before the @EPA shuts down. RT to make noise about his #PoisonPlan – we can’t let him slash #mercury pollution standards. #ClimateFriday <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2018-12-28/mercury-limits-on-coal-plants-no-longer-appropriate-epa-says>
* .@EPAAWheeler’s #PoisonPlan to loosen #mercury pollution standards puts our kids’ chance at a healthy future in jeopardy. This is unacceptable. #PoisonPlan #ClimateFriday <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2018-12-28/mercury-limits-on-coal-plants-no-longer-appropriate-epa-says>
* Rolling back #mercury pollution standards benefits NO ONE. We can’t let @EPAAWheeler get away with this reckless attack on our health. #PoisonPlan #ClimateFriday <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2018-12-28/mercury-limits-on-coal-plants-no-longer-appropriate-epa-says>

**FACEBOOK:**

* The EPA is set to shut down tonight, and [TAG] Acting EPA Administrator Wheeler is trying to bury his latest attack on our health in the news cycle. We can’t let him get away with it. #PoisonPlan #ClimateFriday <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2018-12-28/mercury-limits-on-coal-plants-no-longer-appropriate-epa-says>
* Rolling back mercury pollution standards benefits NO ONE. We can’t let [TAG] Acting EPA Administrator Wheeler get away with this reckless attack on our health. #PoisonPlan #ClimateFriday <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2018-12-28/mercury-limits-on-coal-plants-no-longer-appropriate-epa-says>

**RESOURCES**

[*Mercury Matters 2018*,](https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/c-change/mercurymatters/) Harvard School of Public Health

[*Protect Babies’ Brains: Protect Limits on Mercury and Air Toxics*,](https://www.lung.org/assets/documents/healthy-air/protect-limits-on-mercury-and-toxics.pdf) American Lung Association

[*How Mercury Poisoning Works*](https://www.momscleanairforce.org/how-mercury-poisoning-works/), Moms Clean Air Force

[*Trump’s EPA Poised to Undo Progress on Mercury Pollution Reduction*](https://cdn.americanprogress.org/content/uploads/2018/12/17114552/Mercury-Standards-_brief.pdf), Center for American Progress

**EMAIL TEMPLATES**

**Health-focused Email Template**

**Subject Lines:**

1. Help prevent 130k asthma attacks
2. Wheeler’s latest proposal is lethal
3. No one wants Wheeler’s poison plan

Dear [NAME] –

130,000 more asthma attacks. Up to 11,000 more premature deaths. Every. Single. Year.

That’s what’s at stake if Acting Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Administrator Andrew Wheeler succeeds in sabotaging vital mercury pollution standards.

**This is serious – especially for our kids. Speak out to protect them. [LINK TO COMMENT]**

We know that mercury is dangerous, especially to pregnant women and communities of color. Pollution, including mercury, from coal- and oil-burning power plants is linked to brain, nervous system, and fetal development. The harsh reality is that this proposal will jeopardize the health of our communities and the future of our economy.

**We need your voice to stop Wheeler. Submit a comment here. [LINK TO COMMENT]**

No one asked for this proposal – even industry is opposed. They’ve already invested $18 billion to meet these standards. They’re as committed to protecting their investment as we are in protecting our kids’ chance to grow up healthy.

**Our health must come first. Will you tell Wheeler to stop his destruction? [LINK TO COMMENT]**

Thank you for speaking out,

[SIGNER]

**Communities of Color-focused Email Template**

**Subject lines:**

1. Andrew Wheeler is at it again
2. Wheeler is targeting communities of color
3. Protect our health – voice support for mercury pollution standards

[NAME] –

This is serious. Acting Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Administrator Andrew Wheeler is desperately backpedaling to explain his racist social media history – all while blatantly targeting communities of color.

**Wheeler’s attempts to sabotage the mercury pollution standards put our communities at risk. It’s time to raise your voice: [LINK TO COMMENT]**

Here are the numbers:

* 130,000 more asthma attacks.
* Up to 11,000 more premature deaths.
* 5,700 more hospital visits.

Every. Single. Year.

That’s what’s at stake.. People of color are more likely to live near coal and oil-burning power plants – which means they’ll shoulder a disproportionate burden of the health impact from this pollution.

**Families across the country are under attack. Will you tell Wheeler to stop his destruction? [LINK TO COMMENT]**

Wheeler might “forget” his Facebook post, but his actions speak louder than words. **We need to speak out together against this attack on communities of color. [LINK TO COMMENT]**

Thank you for speaking out,

[SIGNER]

**SAMPLE LANDING PAGE**

**Title:** Donald Trump and Andrew Wheeler are Attacking our Health, Again

**Body:** Once again, President Donald Trump and Acting EPA Administrator Andrew Wheeler are putting communities across the country at risk. This time they’re taking the first step to sabotage safeguards that protect us from dangerous mercury and toxic pollution from power plants. We know that mercury pollution is dangerous – and the EPA itself agrees. **Make no mistake: by sabotaging these standards, Trump and Wheeler are attacking our health.**

130,000 annual asthma attacks. Up to 11,000 annual premature deaths. 5,700 annual hospital visits. That’s what’s at stake if Trump and Wheeler’s dangerous proposal moves forward. And the reality is no one wants this– not even power companies. If no one is asking for these vital protections to be undone, what’s motivating Trump and Wheeler?

We can’t afford to stay silent – there’s too much on the line. Make your voice heard in support of strong mercury pollution standards – **submit a comment to the EPA.**

**SAMPLE COMMENT**

**To:** Acting EPA Administrator Andrew Wheeler

I strongly oppose any weakening of the Mercury and Air Toxic Standards (MATS). These vital safeguards are key to protecting American lives – especially pregnant women, young children, and communities of color. Mercury exposure can cause severe neurological damage, so by sabotaging mercury pollution standards, families like mine will be put at risk. Furthermore, plans to gut these rules jeopardize multi-billion-dollar investments from industry to comply with these common-sense standards.

The EPA’s solemn mission is to protect our health and environment. This proposal to sabotage mercury pollution standards is a stark divergence from that mission. I urge Acting Administrator Wheeler to reconsider this dangerous rollback and protect our families.

**SAMPLE SOCIAL MEDIA LANGUAGE**

**TWITTER:**

* Tell @EPAAWheeler that his attack on #mercury pollution standards puts our children at risk. #PoisonPlan [COMMENT LINK]
* #Mercury pollution standards that help keep our kids safe from neurotoxins are under attack – speak out and defend them today. #PoisonPlan [COMMENT LINK]
* Lives are on the line – speak out against @EPAAWheeler’s dangerous move to sabotage #mercury pollution standards NOW: [COMMENT LINK] #PoisonPlan
* .@EPAAWheeler’s proposal to sabotage #mercury pollution standards is a direct threat to pregnant women, communities of color, and children. Speak out today: [COMMENT LINK] #PoisonPlan
* .@EPAAWheeler’s attempt to sabotage #mercury pollution standards is a direct attack on communities of color. Submit a comment to keep our families safe: [COMMENT LINK] #PoisonPlan
* .@EPAAWheeler’s #PoisonPlan could result in up to 11,000 more premature deaths every year. Speak out to stop him: [COMMENT LINK] #mercury

**FACEBOOK:**

* Tell [TAG] Andrew Wheeler that his attack on #mercury pollution standards is an attack on our children. We won’t stand for it. #PoisonPlan [COMMENT LINK]
* Mercury pollution standards that help keep our kids safe from neurotoxins are under attack – speak out and defend them today. #PoisonPlan [COMMENT LINK]