

FACT SHEET

UPDATES OF THE LIMITS FOR NEW POWER PLANTS UNDER THE MERCURY AND AIR TOXICS STANDARDS (MATS)

ACTION

- On March 28, 2013, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) finalized updates to certain emission limits for new power plants under the Mercury and Air Toxics Standards (MATS). This includes emission limits for mercury, particulate matter (PM), sulfur dioxide (SO₂), acid gases and certain individual metals. Additionally, certain monitoring and testing requirements that apply to new sources were adjusted.
- The new standards affect only new coal- and oil-fired power plants that will be built in the future. The update does not change the final emission limits or other requirements for existing power plants.
- The updates continue to ensure that the rules will protect all Americans from dangerous pollutants such as mercury. The limits are achievable and are consistent with the requirements of the Clean Air Act (CAA).
- New power plants will use the same types of state-of-the-art control technologies to meet these standards as they would have used under the previously finalized standards.
- The agency reconsidered the new source limits for MATS based on new information and analysis that became available to the agency after the rule was finalized.
- The updates are calculated from data about the emissions rates achieved by the best performing source for each of the air toxics or surrogates. The calculated limits remain very low and will still require new power plants to be among the most modern and cleanest ever built.
- We project that these updates will result in no significant change in costs, emission reductions or health benefits from MATS.

BACKGROUND

- On December 16, 2011, the EPA Administrator signed the final MATS and Utility New Source Performance Standards (Utility NSPS) rulemakings, and these were published in the Federal Register on February 16, 2012.
- Following publication of the rules, EPA received 20 petitions for reconsideration of the MATS and 4 for reconsideration of the Utility NSPS.

- On July 20, 2012, EPA sent a letter to petitioners stating that the Agency was granting reconsideration of certain new source issues. Among other things, petitioners said EPA did not use all of the data in the record to set certain air toxics standards for new sources and did not base the SO₂ standard on a regulated utility unit.
- On November 16, 2012, the EPA Administrator signed the proposed updated emission limits for new power plants under MATS, and these updates were published in the Federal Register on November 30, 2012. We considered the issues raised by commenters during the public comment period in this final rule.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- The final reconsideration is posted at: <http://www.epa.gov/mats/actions.html> and <http://www.epa.gov/ttn/atw/utility/utilitypg.html>.
- For further information about the notice, contact Mr. William Maxwell of EPA's Office of Air Quality Planning and Standards, Sector Policies and Programs Division, Energy Strategies Group at (919) 541-5430 or by email at maxwell.bill@epa.gov.