

## FACT SHEET

### PROPOSED RULE TO STREAMLINE E-REPORTING REQUIREMENTS FOR THE MERCURY AND AIR TOXICS STANDARDS FOR POWER PLANTS

#### ACTION

- On August 23, 2016, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) proposed changes to the electronic reporting requirements for the Mercury and Air Toxics Standards (MATS) for power plants.
- This is the next step toward streamlining the “e-reporting” requirements in MATS so power plants can submit all the required emissions data through a single, familiar electronic system -- rather than two separate systems.
- EPA is making revision so power plants can submit all MATS data through the Emissions Collection and Monitoring Plan System (ECMPS) Client Tool -- the same e-reporting system these facilities have used to report data for the Acid Rain Program since 2009.
- Using a single system is common sense and will also make the data about emissions from power plants more transparent and accessible to the public.
- This proposed rule only affects how power plants submit data and does not affect the stringency of MATS in any way. MATS protects the health of all Americans from toxic air pollution, including mercury, from power plants.
  - Mercury can damage children's developing nervous systems, reducing their ability to think and learn. Other toxic air pollutants emitted by power plants, including nickel and arsenic, can cause a range of dangerous health problems in adults, from cancer to respiratory illnesses.
- Overall, this proposed rule will ease burden on power plants, increase MATS data flow and usage, and encourage wider use of continuous emissions monitoring systems (CEMS) for MATS compliance.
  - Collecting the data in ECMPS means more of the MATS data will be in Extensible Markup Language (XML), a searchable format that enhances transparency of the data for all stakeholders, including the public, the sources, and federal, state, local and Tribal governments.
- EPA has been working diligently to compile the required data elements, to develop reporting instructions, and to prepare program modifications.
- In this action, EPA is proposing revisions to and asking for comment on a number of details about MATS e-reporting, including:
  - the reporting and recordkeeping requirements associated with performance stack tests, particulate matter (PM) and hydrogen chloride (HCl) continuous emissions monitoring systems (CEMS), and PM continuous parameter monitoring systems (CPMS);
  - revisions to electronic reporting requirements of mercury CEMS and mercury

- sorbent trap monitoring systems;
  - specific identification of required data elements, along with their Extensible Markup Language (XML) schema; and
  - minor clarifications and corrections to the mercury (Hg) and HCl monitoring provisions.
- Power plants do not have to submit MATS data to two systems during this transition to a single system.
    - In a March 2015 direct final rule, EPA put interim provisions in place so power plants could submit PDF reports to the ECMPS Client Tool on a temporary basis.
    - EPA had allowed PDF submittals through April 2017. In this action, EPA is extending the use of PDF submittals through December 31, 2017.
  - EPA plans to complete the transition to a single MATS e-reporting system by January 2018.
  - The proposal will be open for public comment for 30 days after publication in the Federal Register.

## **BACKGROUND**

- The final MATS rule required owners or operators of affected electric utility steam generating units (EGUs) to report MATS emissions and compliance information electronically using two data systems, depending on what pollutants were being measured and whether power plants were using continuous monitoring or performance stack testing to demonstrate compliance.
  - The two systems were ECMPS and the EPA's WebFIRE database via the Compliance and Emissions Data Reporting Interface (CEDRI).
- Subsequent to the publication of MATS, stakeholders and the EPA agreed that the electronic reporting burden of MATS could be significantly reduced and transparency increased if all of the required information were reported to one data system.
- In 2014, EPA began the process of updating MATS to require all of the electronic reports to be submitted through the ECMPS Client Tool. Those steps included revising MATS, modifying the ECMPS Client Tool, creating a detailed set of reporting instructions, and beta testing the modified software.
- In March 2015, EPA issued a direct final rule requiring power plants to submit a PDF of certain MATS data via ECMPS instead of using CEDRI. This temporary reliance on submitting PDFs in ECMPS was phase one of a two-step process toward using a single data system for MATS.
- EPA committed to a second rulemaking phase to (1) require MATS-affected sources to use the ECMPS Client Tool to submit all required reports in a structured XML format with specific data elements for each type of report; and (2) develop a detailed set of reporting instructions and modify ECMPS accordingly, in order to receive and process the data.

- EPA has been working diligently to compile the required data elements, to develop reporting instructions, and to prepare program modifications.
- After considering the magnitude of the rule changes that would be required to complete this process, coupled with the need to specify data elements to be reported electronically for PM CEMS, PM CPMS, and HCl CEMS, the EPA expects that some stakeholders will want to have an opportunity to review and provide comment on these proposed changes. Therefore, the EPA is issuing a proposed rule for notice and comment to complete phase two— rather than a direct final rulemaking.

## HOW TO COMMENT

- The EPA will accept comment on the proposal for 30 days after publication in the *Federal Register*. Comments, identified by Docket ID No. EPA-HQ-OAR-2009-0234, may be submitted by one of the following methods:
  - [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov): follow the on-line instructions for submitting comments.
  - Email: Comments may be sent by electronic mail (email) to [a-and-r-Docket@epa.gov](mailto:a-and-r-Docket@epa.gov). Include Docket ID No. EPA-HQ-OAR-2009-0234 in the subject line of the message.
  - Fax: Fax your comments to: (202) 566-9744. Attention Docket ID No. EPA-HQ-OAR-2009-0234.
  - Mail: Environmental Protection Agency, EPA Docket Center (EPA/DC), Mail Code 28221T, Attention Docket ID No. EPA-HQ-OAR-2009-0234, 1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20460.
  - Hand/Courier Delivery: EPA Docket Center, Room 3334, EPA WJC West Building, 1301 Constitution Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20004, Attention Docket ID No. EPA-HQ-OAR-2009-0234. Such deliveries are only accepted during the Docket's normal hours of operation, and special arrangements should be made for deliveries of boxed information.

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

- The proposed rule is posted at: <http://www.epa.gov/mats/actions.html>.
- For further information about the notice, contact Barrett Parker of EPA's Office of Air Quality Planning and Standards, Sector Policies and Programs Division at (919) 541-5635 or by email at [parker.barrett@epa.gov](mailto:parker.barrett@epa.gov)