

# DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

news release

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

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## SECRETARY HICKEL REPORTS MERCURY DISCHARGES REDUCED BY 86 PERCENT

Secretary of the Interior Walter J. Hickel today reported that industrial plants reduced mercury discharges into America's waterways from about 287 pounds per day in July to 40 pounds per day in September--a reduction of 86 percent.

"This tremendous progress in lessening hazards to public health is dramatic evidence that companies can move rapidly when the safety of our Nation is at stake," Secretary Hickel said.

The Secretary expressed his pleasure that in almost every instance of mercury pollution, the industry involved has given full cooperation in the sampling procedure and has engaged in intensive discussions with government experts on the fastest and most effective means of reducing the pollution.

"State pollution control agencies have also played a significant role in the clean-up and will continue to participate in this joint Federal-State-Industry effort," he said, adding:

"As great as this reduction is, it is not enough to remove the danger. We shall push vigorously ahead where companies fail to comply with our requests to reduce mercury discharges to amounts that do not pose a threat to health."

Secretary Hickel pointed out that 50 companies were listed as mercury dischargers. That list includes 10 firms against which he requested the Justice Department July 26 to file charges that they were polluting waterways with discharges of mercury.

The Secretary emphasized that he will use all resources of his Department to make accurate determinations of the amounts of mercury that are now being discharged by users and will follow up with corrective action to reduce this pollution.

Hickel added that, in addition to the 50 industrial plants listed as polluters of rivers, streams and lakes, another 79 companies that use mercury in their operations had no detectable mercury discharges.

Secretary Hickel termed the reduction of 86 percent from July to September in mercury discharges "encouraging," but emphasized again that the Administration's goal is to reduce mercury pollution to below the limits of detectability.

The attached information details the status of mercury contamination as of September 4, on a location-by-location and company-by-company basis.

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KNOWN MERCURY DISCHARGERS - ANALYSIS POSITIVE

(As of September 4, 1970)

<u>Name and Address</u>	<u>Receiving Waters</u>	<u>Remarks</u>
Wyandotte Chemical Co. Geismar, Louisiana	Mississippi River	Discharged 1.70 lbs/day on May 19, 1970. Reduced load to 0.91 lbs/day on July 18, 1970.
Dow Chemical Company Plaquemine, Louisiana	Mississippi River	Company estimated earlier losses to be 40-50 lbs/day. Discharged 3.2 lbs/day on May 18, 1970. On July 15, 1970 mercury was not detected.
* Detrex Chemical Industries ditch to Lake Erie Ashtabula, Ohio		Discharged 2-60 lbs/day in Mar.-Apr. 1970 and 3.0 lbs/ day on June 26, 1970. Reduced load to 1.48 lbs/day on July 14, 1970.
Tenneco Chemical Company Pasadena, Texas	Houston Ship Channel	Discharged approx. 1.0 lb/day on May 19, 1970. Reduced load to 0.02 - 0.15 lbs/day on July 17 - 21, 1970
* Wyandotte Chemical Co. Wyandotte, Michigan	Detroit River	Discharged 11 to 74 lbs/day from Mar. 27 to April 10, 1970 Reduced load to .50 to .35 lbs/ day on July 22 to 24, 1970.
* Allied Chemical Co. Solvay, New York	Onondaga Lake	Discharged 4.4 lbs/day on July 14, 1970.
* Diamond Shamrock Corp. Delaware City, Delaware	Delaware River	Discharged 29.1 lbs/day on July 14, 1970. Reduced load to 3.03 lbs/day on Aug 21, 1970.
* Diamond Shamrock Corp. Muscle Shoals, Alabama	Pond Creek to Tennessee River	Discharged 8.6 lbs/day on May 7, 1970. Reduced load to 3.25 lbs/day on July 15, 1970.

Name and Address	Receiving Waters	Remarks
* Georgia Pacific Corp. Bellingham, Washington	Puget Sound	Discharged 10.5 lbs/day on July 14, 1970--Chlor-Akali plant Reduced load to 0.17 lbs/day on Aug 10-12, 1970.
* International Mining & Chemicals Co., Chlor-Alkali Division Orrington, Maine	Penobscot River	Discharged 2.65 lbs/day on July 14, 1970. Reduced load to 0.22 on Aug 19, 1970 (Company value).
* Olin Mathieson Chemical Corp. Augusta, Georgia	Savannah River	Discharged 12.9 lbs/day on May 20, 1970. Reduced load to 0.51 lbs/day on July 14, 1970.
* Olin Mathieson Chemical Corp. Niagara Falls, New York	Niagara River	Discharged 26.6 lbs/day on July 14, 1970. Reduced load to 0.38 to 0.85 lbs/day on Aug 12-16, 1970 (Company values).
* Oxford Paper Company Rumford, Maine	Androscoggin River	Discharged 26.2 lbs/day on July 14, 1970. Plant closed Aug 15, 1970.
* Pennwalt Chemical Co. Calvert City, Kentucky	Tennessee River	Discharged 1.54 lbs/day on July 14, 1970.
* Weyerhaeuser Company Longview, Washington	Columbia River	Discharged 15.1 lbs/day on July 14, 1970. Reduction to approx. 1.0 lb/day by Aug. 17, 1970. (Company Value.)
B.F. Goodrich Chemical Co. Calvert City, Kentucky	Tennessee River	Company claims reductions prior to July 14, 1970. On July 14, 1970 0.05 lbs/day of mercury were discharged.
Olin Mathieson Chemical Corp. McIntosh, Alabama	Tombigbee River	State issued statement that discharges were substantially reduced July 13, 1970. On July 14, 1970 0.12 lbs/day of mercury were discharged.

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Stauffer Chemical Co. Axis, Alabama	Mobile River	State issued statement that discharges were substantially reduced July 13, 1970. On July 14, 1970 0.07 lbs/day of mercury were discharged.
Allied Chemical Co. Moundsville, West Va.	Ohio River	Discharged 3.7 lbs/day on July 15, 1970. Reduced load to .5 to 1.0 lb/day on Aug 28, 1970 (Company value).
Diamond Shamrock Chemical Co. Deer Park, Texas	Houston Ship Channel	Discharged 13.2 lbs/day on May 15, 1970. Reduced load to 1.72 to 6.0 lbs/day on July 18-27, 1970. On September 1, 1970 discharge reduced to 1 to 2 lbs/day and expects to reach less than .5 lbs/day by Oct 15, 1970. (Company value.)
* General Aniline & Film Corp. Linden, New Jersey	Arthur Kill	Discharged 29.2 lbs/day on July 17, 1970. Reduced load to 6.7 lbs/day on Aug 7, 1970.
Olin Mathieson Chemical Corp. Charlestown, Tennessee	Hiwassee River	Discharged 2.2 lbs/day on July 16, 1970. Reduced load to 1.0 lb/day on Aug 26, 1970 (Company value).
PPG Industries Natrium, West Virginia	Ohio River	Discharged 4.0 lbs/day on July 15, 1970. Reduced load to 0.5 to 1.0 lb/day on Aug 28, 1970 (Company value).
Riegel Paper Company Riegelwood, N.C.	Cape Fear River	Discharged 6.32 lbs/day on July 17, 1970. Reduced load to 0.59 lbs/day on Aug 10, 1970 (Company value).
Westinghouse Fairmont, West Virginia	Monogahela River	Early analyses not available. Sediment analyses indicate previously higher discharges. On July 15, 1970 0.19 lbs/day were discharged.

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Olin Mathieson Chemical Corp. Saltsville, Virginia	Northfork Holston River	Early analyses not available. Sediment analyses indicate previously higher discharges. On Aug 12, 1970 0.58 lbs/day were discharged.
Wyandotte Chemical Co. Port Edwards, Wisconsin	Wisconsin River	Early analyses not available. Sediment analyses indicate previously higher discharges. On July 27, 1970 0.08 lbs/day were discharged.
NASA, Lewis Research Center Cleveland, Ohio	Rocky River	Early analyses not available. Sediment analyses indicate previously higher discharges. On July 21, 1970 0.02 lbs/day were discharged.
Aluminum Co. of America Point Comfort, Texas	Lavaca Bay	Early analyses not available. Sediment analyses indicate previously higher discharges. On July 29 to Aug 2, 1970, 1.96 to 1.45 lbs/day were discharged.
PPG Industries Lake Charles, Louisiana	Bayou d'Inde	Discharged 26.5 lbs/day on July 20, 1970. On Sept 1, 1970 no mercury being discharged; using a temporary lagoon. Permanent facilities are to reduce loading to less than .05 lbs/day by Sept 30, 1970 (Company report)
Hooker Electro-Chemical Co. Niagara Falls, New York	Niagara Falls sewer system and Niagara River	Discharged 1.34 lbs/day on July 23, 1970. Company will report improvement-- Sept 18 reporting date.
Monochem Incorporated Geismar, Louisiana	Mississippi River	Discharged 0.91 lbs/day on July 18, 1970. Sept 2, 1970 load less than .25 lbs/day. (Company report)

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Woodbridge Chemical Co. Woodbridge, N.J.	Berrys Creek to Hackensack River	Sample of a discharge on August 12, 1970 indicated 2.08 lbs/day of mercury. (Subject to further investigation)
Chesbrough Ponds, Inc. Falchney Inst. Co. Watertown, N.Y.	Black River to Lake Ontario	On Aug 5, 1970, 1.50 lbs/day of mercury were being discharged. (Subject to further investigation)
Buckeye Cellulose Corp. Memphis, Tenn.	Wolf River to Miss. River	Discharged 0.10 lbs/day on Aug 13, 1970.
Allied Chemical Co. Buffalo, N.Y.	Buffalo River to Lake Erie	Discharged 0.66 lbs/day on July 27, 1970.
Buckman Laboratories Memphis, Tenn.	Lateral sewer to Wolf River inter- ceptor to Miss. River	Discharged 0.06 lbs/day on Aug 11, 1970.
Chapman Chemical Co. Memphis, Tenn.	Non Connah Creek to Miss. River	Discharged 0.09 lbs/day on Aug 14, 1970.
Williams Gold Refining Co. Buffalo, N.Y.	City of Buffalo STP to Niagara River	Discharged 0.001 lbs/day on July 30, 1970.
Hill Air Force Base Ogden, Utah	North Davis Co. STP	Discharged 0.005 lbs/day on Aug 6, 1970.
Monsanto Chemical Co. Texas City, Texas	Galveston Bay	Discharged 0.45 lbs/day on Aug 1, 1970.
Garrett-Callahan Co. Millbrae, Calif.	Millbrae STP to San Francisco Bay	On Aug 5, 1970, found to be discharging a small amount of concentrated waste.
General Mercury Corp. Tempe, Arizona	Ground water (via leach field)	On Aug 14, 1970, found to be discharging a small amount of concentrated waste (equivalent to 0.001 lbs/day).
NOSCO Plastics Erie, Pa.	City of Erie STP to Lake Erie	Discharged 0.002 lbs/day on July 28, 1970.

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Malinckrodt Chemical Works Erie, Pa.	City of Erie STP to Lake Erie	Calculated to be discharging 0.051 lbs/day on July 28, 1970 (load determined by subtracting NOSCO Plastics load from combined NOSCO-Malinckrodt load).
General Electric Chemical Products Plant Cleveland, Ohio	Lake Erie	Discharged 0.003 lbs/day on Aug 20, 1970.
Quicksilver Products San Francisco, Calif.	City of San Francisco STP to San Francisco Bay	On Aug 5, 1970, found to be discharging a small amount of concentrated waste (equivalent to 0.004 lbs/day).
General Electric Co. Edmore, Michigan	Cedar Lake to Pine River	Discharged .002 lbs/day on Aug 3-4, 1970.
Pioneer Paint and Varnish Tucson, Arizona	Santa Cruz River	Discharged 0.006 lbs/day on Aug 21-22, 1970.
Reactive Metals, Inc. Ashtabula, Ohio	West Branch Fields Brook to Fields Brook to Ashtabula River	Discharged .199 lbs/day on Aug 3-4, 1970.

\*Firms subject to Federal suit under 1899 Refuse Act

\*\* Firms subject to State action.

\*\*\* Firm subject to 180-day notice abatement action under Federal Water Pollution Control Act