



MERCURY AND AIR TOXICS STANDARDS (MATS)

Also known as:

NESHAPS (National Emission Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants) FROM COAL- AND OIL-FIRED EGUs (Electric Utility Steam Generating Units)

Or

MAXIMUM ACHIEVABLE CONTROL TECHNOLOGY (MACT)

Background

The Clean Air Act requires the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to regulate emissions of hazardous air pollutants (HAPs) from electric generating units, which include mercury, particulate metals and acid gases. In March 2011, EPA proposed standards to limit emissions of 188 HAPs from power plants. This rule will replace the court-vacated Clean Air Mercury Rule and will require affected facilities to install maximum achievable control technology (MACT) for reducing HAPs. A final rule is expected by December 16, 2011.

How it Affects Great River Energy

Great River Energy's Coal Creek Station, Stanton Station and Spiritwood Station are subject to the MACT rule. Once the rule is finalized, all utilities will have three years to comply. Great River Energy has been conducting testing for many years at both Coal Creek and Stanton to develop carbon sorbents for mercury. More recent work has focused on actual emissions testing and possible alternative monitoring technologies. Since Spiritwood Station is a new plant with best available emission control technologies, we expect it will meet the requirements defined in a final rule.

Great River Energy's Position

Because of our efforts to reduce mercury emissions, such as our DryFining™ installation at Coal Creek Station, Great River Energy is well positioned to comply with the proposed mercury emission limits. We have submitted comments to EPA expressing technical concerns with other aspects of the rule, and we will continue to test technologies for reducing hazardous air pollutants as we await the final rule.