

## EIP REPORT: ELECTRIC POWER INDUSTRY "NOT MAKING A DENT" IN DANGEROUS MERCURY POLLUTION, WHICH ROSE AT OVER HALF OF THE NATION'S 50 DIRTIEST POWER PLANTS

*Texas Home to 5 of the 10 Worst Plants, Other States With 2 or More Among the Worst 50: AL, AR, AZ, GA, IL, IN, KS, LA, MO, ND, OH, PA, WI, WV; Technology Exists to Deal With Emissions Linked to Learning Disabilities in U.S. Children.*

WASHINGTON, D.C.//March 17, 2010//More than half (27) of the nation's 50 worst power plants for mercury emissions increased their mercury emissions from 2007 to 2008 (the latest year for which data is available), [according to a new report from the nonprofit and nonpartisan Environmental Integrity Project \(EIP\)](#). The six leading U.S. power suppliers with three or more plants on the mercury emission list by total pounds include Luminant (formerly TXU), American Electric Power (AEP), Southern Company, Entergy, Ameren, and NRG.

The power plants that provide electricity to run America's homes, businesses, and factories are also the single largest source of mercury air pollution, responsible for more than 40 percent of all mercury emissions nationwide. Mercury is a highly toxic metal, and once released into the atmosphere, it settles in lakes and rivers, where it moves up the food chain to humans. According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, roughly half of the nation's lakes and reservoirs have levels of mercury that exceed safe levels. Each year, more than 300,000 newborn babies may have an increased risk of learning disabilities due to in utero exposure to mercury, which is a neurotoxin that causes impaired neurological development in fetuses, infants and children.

Other key EIP report findings include the following:

- The top 50 power plant mercury emitters were essentially flat from 2007 to 2008, with mercury emissions off by a paltry 0.26 percent.
- Texas is home to the largest mercury emitter-- Luminant's Martin Lake power plant, which reported a 4.56 percent increase from 2007 to 2008. In fact, the Lone Star State claims five of the 10 largest power plant mercury air pollution sites in the nation. Dallas-based Luminant (formerly TXU) has three of the nation's top five largest mercury emitters, in terms of total pounds emitted, all operating in East Texas.
- A total of 15 states had two or more of the 50 largest power plants for mercury emissions – Texas (7), Alabama (4), Pennsylvania (4), Indiana (3), North Dakota (3), Ohio (3), West Virginia (3), Arkansas (2), Arizona (2), Georgia (2), Illinois (2), Kansas (2), Louisiana (2), Missouri (2), and Wisconsin (2).
- Overall, power plant mercury emissions from electric utilities decreased 4.7 percent from 2007 to 2008, at the same time that gross power generation declined roughly 2 percent.

Environmental Integrity Project Senior Attorney Ilan Levin said: "**Despite years of promises, the electric power industry has barely made a dent in its mercury emissions this decade. This slow progress is nowhere near the levels that would be achieved if all plants installed modern pollution controls. The nation's power plants are not even close to meeting the levels that EPA forecasted under a weak Bush Administration power plant mercury rule that was subsequently thrown out by a federal court.**"

For a copy of the full EIP report, [click here](#)