

Bishops applaud new EPA standards on mercury reductions, power plant pollution

Brian Roewe | Dec. 21, 2011 Eco Catholic

Just in from the the U.S. Bishops' Committee on Domestic Justice and Human Development:

WASHINGTON??A new national standard to reduce mercury and toxic air pollution from power plants is an important step forward to protect the health of all people, especially unborn babies and young children, from harmful exposure to dangerous air pollutants,? said the U.S. bishops? domestic policy chairman in response to the Environmental Protection Agency?s (EPA) announcement of a new rule limiting hazardous air pollution.

Recently finalized Mercury and Air Toxics Standards will reduce toxic air pollution from coal- and oil-fired power plants that are the largest source of mercury pollution in the United States. Many of these pollutants are linked to health problems, particularly in children before and after birth, the poor and the elderly.

?The bishops welcome this important move by the Administration to adopt long-awaited standards to reduce hazardous air pollution and protect children?s health,? said Bishop Stephen Blaire. ?In the end it just makes good sense to want to have clean air for our children and families to breathe and for future generations.?

Bishop Blaire is chairman of the Committee on Domestic Justice and Human Development of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB). He also cited Catholic teaching on the protection of the environment and the need to protect human life and dignity at all stages.

?Children, inside and outside the womb, are uniquely vulnerable to environmental hazards and exposure to toxic pollutants in the environment,? he said. ?Their bodies, behaviors and size leave them more exposed than adults to such health hazards.?

Bishop Blaire had earlier commented on the proposed rule in a June 20 letter to the EPA.

To read the full text of the letter, [click here](#) [1].

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[1] <http://www.usccb.org/about/general-counsel/rulemaking/upload/comments-to-epa-on-mercury-2011-06.pdf>