

NATIONAL VEHICLE MERCURY SWITCH RECOVERY PROGRAM LAUNCHED - A UNIQUE COLLABORATION



Canadian Vehicle
Manufacturers' Association
Association canadienne
des constructeurs de véhicules



OTTAWA – JUNE 2, 2008 – Canada's steel and auto industries are supporting and funding a national program designed to remove mercury-containing switches that were used in vehicles for convenience lights (under the hood or in the trunk) and anti-lock braking systems from end-of-life scrapped vehicles before they are flattened, shredded and recycled into new steel. This national program builds on the successful *Switch Out* initiative delivered by the Clean Air Foundation (CAF), a national not-for-profit organization. With this new funding, CAF will expand *Switch Out* to all provinces and territories in Canada, providing the infrastructure for the collection, removal and management of the mercury-containing switches as well as practical educational materials to recyclers across the country.

This program partnership is supported by Canadian automotive recyclers and dismantlers and their respective associations – the Automotive Recyclers of Canada (ARC) and the Canadian Association of Recycling Industries (CARI). The collaborative effort among the steel, auto and recycling/dismantling industries is unprecedented and is essential to the success of the program, which will assist the steel and auto industries to meet the new federal pollution prevention requirements regarding mercury-containing switches.

Mark Nantais, President of the Canadian Vehicle Manufacturers' Association stated that "This program will ensure that the mercury-containing switches in end-of-life vehicles are properly removed and managed so mercury is captured and prevented from entering the environment. As of January 1, 2003 the use of mercury switches in new automobiles has been voluntarily and completely phased out."

Ron Watkins, President of the Canadian Steel Producers Association, added that "Removing mercury-containing switches from end-of-life vehicles represents the most effective way to reduce mercury releases to the environment. Canada's steel producers are committed to the continued success of the *Switch Out* program, and are pleased to be working with the auto industry and the Clean Air Foundation to expand it into a truly national program."

Steve Fletcher, Managing Director of the Automotive Recyclers of Canada (ARC), said "ARC supports the establishment of a national vehicle mercury switch recovery program. We are committed to working in good faith as we have done in the past and even more now to ensure that the mercury switches from all scrap vehicles are removed." Leonard Shaw, Executive Director of the Canadian Association of Recycling Industries (CARI), commented that "As stewards of our environment, CARI looks forward to applying our industry expertise to help develop the national *Switch Out* program."

Since 2001, *Switch Out* has engaged 448 auto recyclers to collect more than 160,000 mercury-containing convenience lighting switches across Canada. Ersilia Serafini, Executive Director of CAF, stated that "we are committed to delivering this national program and will build on our past success to ensure that the program achieves results. We look forward to working with the Canadian steel and auto industries, as well as engaging many more recyclers and dismantlers in this national program."

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