

NEWS RELEASE



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Statement of Edwin D. Hill, International President International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, on the Need for Legislative Action to Phase in EPA Regulations on Clean Air Act

We have reviewed the Environmental Protection Agency's proposed Mercury and Air Toxics Standard, also known as maximum achievable control technology (MACT), for utilities and firmly believe that the three-year timeframe for reducing emissions of carbon, mercury and other pollutants is not realistic. We agree with those who are seeking legislative action to phase in the impact of the regulations in a manner that will preserve jobs and reliable electric power.

We have met with the EPA to discuss our concerns and recognize that the EPA has limited discretion and flexibility in addressing compliance timelines because it is bound by the mandates of a federal court. We believe that realistic and reasonable standards will only be achieved through legislation.

We support reducing emissions and we have publicly supported a diverse energy portfolio. However, new nuclear plants take years to permit and construct. Despite efforts to introduce more renewables into our nation's energy mix – efforts the IBEW fully supports – the Department of Energy estimates that only 2 percent of our electricity was derived from wind, solar and geothermal in 2009.

Many of the affected coal plants, aged 50 to 60 years or older, are located in the Midwest, a region that is not well served by renewable energy sources. Early shutdowns of coal-fired plants could lead to the loss of 50,000 workers in utilities, mining, railroad and related occupations and 200,000 more in indirect losses. If – as most credible estimates predict – the utilities have to close 50,000 megawatts or more of coal plants, rates will soar and reliability will be dramatically affected in many parts of the country.

We agree with those who are calling on Congress to act. We will work with those who will craft a balanced approach to emissions limits with the need for jobs and reliable electricity.

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The [International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers](#) (IBEW) represents approximately 725,000 members who work in a wide variety of fields, including manufacturing, utilities, construction, telecommunications, broadcasting, railroads and government