Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors

Supervisor Patti Logsdon, 9th District

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Contact: Brian Rothgery, 414-278-4230

Supervisor Logsdon Opposes Increased Mercury Pollution in Wisconsin Waterways

MILWAUKEE – Supervisor Patti Logsdon joined with her colleagues who voted unanimously at April's County Board meeting to oppose a special variance that would allow WE Energies to dump more than three times the safe limit of mercury into Lake Michigan.

> *"Fishing in and around Milwaukee County's lakes and rivers is an important part of our Wisconsin culture. Healthy lakes and waterways contribute to our economy through tourism based jobs, and protect our heritage by providing recreational opportunities that generations of Wisconsinites can enjoy.*
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> *"In order to protect wildlife and human health, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources has determined a safe limit for discharging mercury into Lake Michigan. Mercury is a dangerous neurotoxin that can find its way into the human body through the consumption of fish, and can permanently disrupt the development of unborn children.*
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> *"I'm opposed to WE Energies request for a variance to dump more than three times the safe limit of mercury into our water because I believe we should be working to reduce, not increase, the amount of harmful substances that are going into our lakes and waterways.*
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> *"WE Energies has been a good corporate citizen and creates jobs and opportunity for our community. I'm not opposed to coal-based power plants, but I believe that everyone should play by the same rules, especially when it comes to protecting the health and safety of our children," said Logsdon.*

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) has determined that a limit of 1.3 nanograms of mercury per liter of water discharge is necessary to protect wildlife and human health. WE Energies has requested a variance from the DNR to discharge 4.1 nanograms of mercury per liter of water into Lake Michigan.

The WE Energies Oak Creek powerplant burns 6,000 tons of coal per day and uses more than 1.5 million gallons of water per minute to remove mercury-laden coal ash from its boilers, which is then returned to Lake Michigan.

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