

# The Wisconsin Approach to Mercury Reduction

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District

## Environmental Circumstances

- Fish consumption advisory
- USEPA adopts 1.3 ng/L limit for Great Lakes
- Wisconsin adopts 1.3 ng/L state-wide
- Water reclamation facility discharges likely to be greater than 1.3 ng/L

## State Goals

- Work within existing regulatory framework of discharge permits
- Cooperate rather than command and control
- Decentralize expertise and action
- Iterate and improve incrementally

## Permit Strategy

- Sampling starts before limit
- Ultimate limit in abeyance
- Pro-active source reduction
- Interim Limit
  - Site specific
  - Based upon sample results
  - Limit steps down each permit cycle
- Requirements implemented according to discharge magnitude and permit cycle

## State Coordination

- Facilitates diverse state-wide municipal group
- Strategically exploits grant funding

## Local Action

- Collection programs
- Medical
  - Hospital workshops
  - Thermometer exchanges
- Schools
  - Rewards
  - Curriculum
- Thermostats
- Dental offices

## State Guidance

- *Wisconsin Mercury Sourcebook* (1997)
- *Mercury Pollutant Minimization Program Guidance Manual for Municipalities* (2006)
  - Based upon pilot work
  - Detailed instructions for each sector
  - Scoring system to evaluate progress

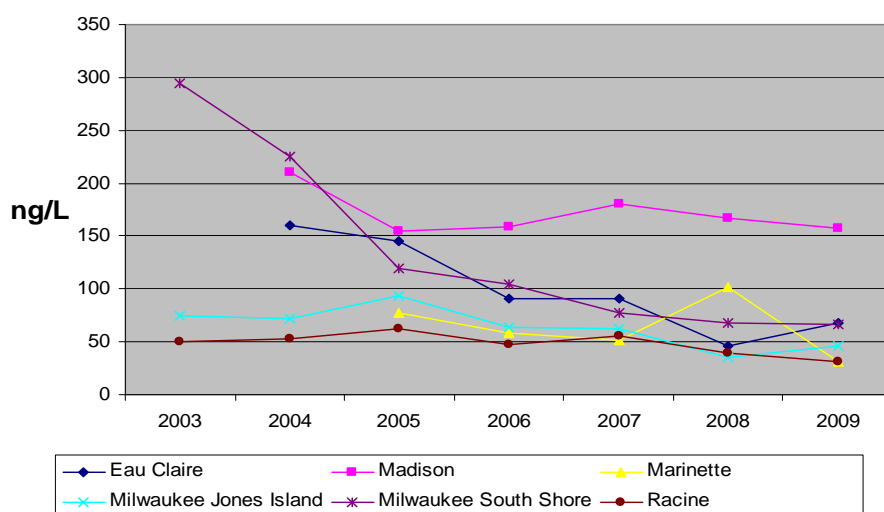
## Program Expansion

- Contract with municipalities
- Municipalities get
  - Guidance
  - Positive recognition
  - Ultimate limit in abeyance
- State gets
  - Earlier reduction
  - Cooperation

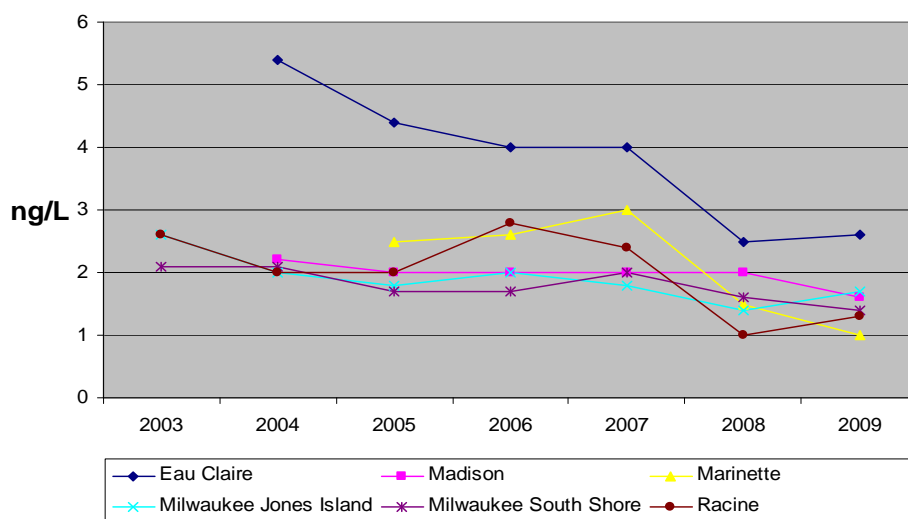
## Other programs

- Emission limits for coal combustion
- Dairy manometer replacement
- Vehicle switch removal
  - Used storm water pollution prevention authority
  - Disposal
    - Initially supported with grant funding
    - Now supported by End-of-Life Vehicle Solutions

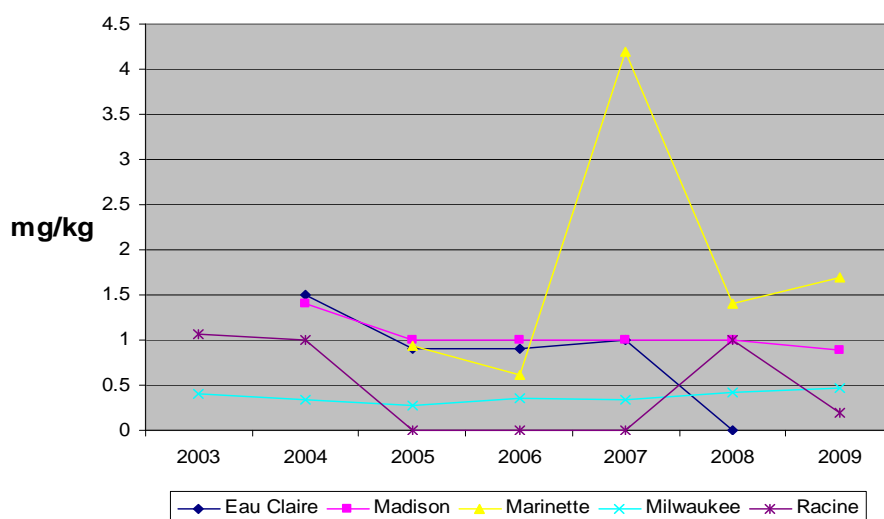
## Annual Median Influent Concentrations



## Annual Median Effluent Concentrations



## Annual Median Biosolids Concentrations



## Conclusions

- Source reduction can occur despite political inaction at the state level
- A little grant funding can produce big results
- An incremental cooperative approach directs energy into progress instead of conflict
- A collaborative decentralized approach produces an effective network of experts

## Water Reclamation Facility Status

- Conditions are variable
- Influent and effluent are going down
- Whether 1.3 ng/L is achievable is still unknown

# Contact

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