



The State of New Hampshire  
**Department of Environmental Services**

**Robert R. Scott, Commissioner**



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August 29, 2022

His Excellency, Christopher T. Sununu  
And the Honorable Council  
State House  
Concord, NH 03301

**REQUESTED ACTION**

Authorize the Department of Environmental Services (NHDES) to pay the 2023 membership dues to the Northeast Waste Management Officials' Association, Interstate Mercury Education & Reduction Clearinghouse (IMERC), Boston, MA (VC # 161803-B001), in the amount of \$5,500 for the period October 1, 2022 through September 30, 2023, effective upon Governor and Council approval. 100% Hazardous Waste Clean-up Funds.

Funding is available in the following account:

Dept of Environmental Services	<u>FY 2023</u>
03-44-44-440010-5923-026-500251 P2 & SBTAP, Organizational Dues	\$ 5,500

**EXPLANATION**

The Interstate Mercury Education & Reduction Clearinghouse (IMERC) is a consortium of state mercury reduction programs operated by the Northeast Waste Management Official's Association (NEWMOA) on behalf of the member states. NEWMOA is a non-profit, non-partisan interstate waste and pollution prevention association. NEWMOA was established by the governors of the New England States as an official interstate organization in accordance with Section 1005 of the federal Resource Conservation and Recovery Act.

The purpose of IMERC is to provide:

- ongoing technical and programmatic assistance to states that have enacted mercury education and reduction legislation (RSA 149-M:51-58), and
- a single point of contact for industry and the public for information on mercury-added products and member states' mercury education and reduction programs.

Listed below are answers to standard questions required for Governor and Council organizational dues and membership approval submissions:

- **How long has this organization been in existence and how long has this agency been a member of this organization?** The organization has been in existence since 2001, and New Hampshire was a founding member and has participated continuously since 2001.
- **Is there any other organization which provides the same or similar benefits which your agency belongs to?** No, there is not. IMERC was specifically set up by the Northeast States to perform functions related to implementation of state mercury reduction laws.
- **How many other states belong to this organization and is your agency the sole New Hampshire state agency that is a member?** Currently, fifteen states belong to this organization (all the Northeast states and several outside the region), and all of these states have passed legislation regulating mercury-added products. NHDES is the sole New Hampshire state member.
- **How is the dues structure established? (Standard fee for all states, based on population, based on other criteria, etc).** The dues structure is based on population – “small” states such as NH, VT & ME pay \$5,500, while “large” states such as MA, CT, NY pay \$10,600.
- **What benefit does the state receive from participating in this membership?** IMERC serves as a single point of contact for businesses subject to the provisions of NH’s and other member states’ mercury-added product laws. This system is highly efficient and saves the state from having to fund a full-time position (FTE) to perform this work. It also saves businesses from having to work with individual states on compliance issues; they can simply send all their information to IMERC, where it is consolidated and distributed to the member states. IMERC has developed and implemented an electronic data submission system, allowing product manufacturers to efficiently submit their data and allowing state IMERC members to easily review the data online. In addition, IMERC provides information & training for manufacturers on state mercury reduction laws and requirements, processes data, and issues reports as directed by state members. All of these tasks would need to be performed by state staff if IMERC did not exist.
- **Are training or educational/research materials included in the membership? If so, is the cost included? Explain in detail.** Yes, these items are included, as is the cost of the items. IMERC publishes informational web pages, fact sheets and a newsletter, and also conducts research and processes and analyzes data as directed by the state members. Such analyses include analyzing trends in the amount of mercury used in consumer products and evaluating the success of state legislative efforts.
- **Is the membership required to receive any federal grants or required in order to receive or participate in licensing or certification exams? Explain.** No.
- **Is there any travel included with this membership fee? Explain in detail any travel to include the number of employees involved, the number of trips, destination if known and purposes of membership supported trips.** There is no travel specifically included in this membership fee. Meetings are conducted exclusively via conference calls and webinars.

- **Which state agency employees are directly involved with this organization? (Indicate if they are members, voting members, committee members, and/or officers of the organization. The Pollution Prevention Section Administrator is currently the sole NHDES representative and is a voting member.**
- **Explain in detail any negative impact to the State if the Agency did not belong to this organization.** If NHDES were not a member of IMERC, then a staff position would either need to be created or an existing staff person reassigned to perform the work required under state statute (RSA 149-M:51-58). IMERC performs this work (processing notifications from hundreds of manufacturers of mercury products, contacting the manufacturers if information is deficient, tracking the phase-out of mercury products and providing educational materials and a point of contact for manufacturers, environmental organizations and citizens on mercury products) on behalf of, and under the guidance of, state IMERC members. In this time of limited funding, it is critical for New Hampshire to support NEWMOA and its efforts to ensure manufacturers understand and adhere to the laws of our state so that we can minimize the impact of mercury in our environment. If other member states also fail to pay their dues, this could essentially shut down IMERC and impair NEWMOA's ability to do its work for those states.

We respectfully request your approval of this item.



Robert R. Scott  
Commissioner



c/o NEWMOA  
89 South Street, Suite 600  
Boston, MA 02111

# Invoice

Bill To
NH DES 29 Hazen Drive PO Box 95 Concord, NH 03302

Date	Invoice #
7/21/2022	B250NHDES...

Terms	Project
Net 30	B250

Description	Amount
Interstate Mercury Education and Reduction Clearinghouse (IMERC) for FY2023 October 1, 2022 - September 30, 2023	5,500.00

Please make Check Payable to Northeast Waste Management Officials' Association (NEWMOA) For billing questions, please contact Lois Makina, 617-367-8558 x312 or Lmakina@newmoa.org	<b>Total</b>	\$5,500.00 Federal ID #: 04-2901917
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## Interstate Mercury Education and Reduction Clearinghouse

### Benefits of Membership in the IMERC

IMERC provides:

- Ongoing technical and programmatic assistance to states that have enacted mercury education and reduction legislation; and
- A single point of contact for industry and the public for information on mercury-added products and member states' mercury education and reduction programs.

IMERC Members benefit through:

- Consistency in state implementation of mercury education and reduction laws, including notification and other data gathering activities, product bans and phase-outs, labeling, and collection systems;
- Effective interstate coordination and communication on legislative initiatives, laws, and rules concerning mercury-added products;
- Efficient and effective communications with the regulated community;
- Inter-state communications and coordination on public education on mercury-added products and wastes;
- Effective measurement of the impacts of state mercury-reduction programs;
- Public access to relevant state information and guidance; and
- Effective collection of mercury-added products and improved management of these materials.

IMERC facilitates deliberations that provide advice and assistance to the individual states for their decision-making. Specifically, IMERC:

- Collects and manages data submitted by manufacturers of mercury-added products, as necessary to implement the notification provisions of state mercury reduction legislation;
- Facilitates interstate collaboration on the development and implementation of public education and outreach programs on mercury-added products;
- Endeavors to make information on mercury-added products available to industry and the public;
- Responds to public information requests for information on mercury-added products, the requirements of the member states, and the status of state implementation of their laws; and
- Provides technical assistance, facilitates reviews, and makes recommendations to the member states concerning
  - manufacturers' applications for exemptions to the phase-out of mercury-added products;
  - manufacturers' applications for alternative labeling of mercury-added products; and
  - manufacturers' plans for collection and proper waste management of mercury-containing materials.