

DOCKETED

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CEC Building Standards and Mercury Thermostat Recycling

see attached document

Additional submitted attachment is included below.



KYLE PITSOR

Vice President, Government Relations

August 2015

Andrew McAllister, Commissioner
California Energy Commission
1516 Ninth Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Comment Regarding Staff Workshop on Existing Building Energy Efficiency Standards (IEPR 2015-07-27): Introduction to the Thermostat Recycling Corporation

Dear Chairman McAllister:

The National Electrical Manufacturers Association (NEMA) is the primary trade association representing the interests of the US electrical products industry. Our 400 member companies supply the full spectrum of products used worldwide in the generation, transmission, distribution, control, and end-use of electricity.

In 1998, three NEMA member companies – Honeywell, White-Rodgers, and GE – voluntarily established the Thermostat Recycling Corporation (TRC), a nationwide non-profit designed to facilitate recycling of mercury-switch thermostats. The TRC now has 29 corporate members and is the only national program of its kind in the US (see www.thermostat-recycle.org).

As the California Energy Commission (CEC) considers ways to strengthen its Building Energy Efficiency Standards to support California's energy goals, we encourage the Commission to add information about thermostat recycling into the 2015 Integrated Energy Policy Report. This is not simply an environmental issue – it is a **legal imperative** as the management and disposal of mercury thermostats are strictly regulated under California law.¹

The TRC plays a vital role in this process by providing a statewide network of collection sites at which heating, ventilation & air conditioning (HVAC) contractors and demolition workers who remove out-of-service mercury thermostats can dispose of them properly. This is particularly important for contractors implementing energy efficiency or HVAC replacement programs that involve upgrading old thermostats to new demand response or smart grid enabled devices. Once a mercury thermostat is removed from service, under California law that thermostat can never be re-installed and must be taken by the contractor to a recycling location. Fortunately, the TRC program provides a convenient and cost-free means for contractors to meet this requirement.

I encourage you to familiarize yourself with this industry-funded and operated program, and to share this information with CEC offices and staff engaged in the building standards initiative. I have included a copy of previous correspondence sent several years ago to then Chairwoman Douglas to provide the same introduction.

¹ The Mercury Thermostat Collection Act of 2008, chaptered as article 10.2.2., chapter 6.5 of Division 20 of the California Health and Safety Code, relating to hazardous waste.

Manufacturers are committed to working with state officials to ensure the TRC's continued success in California and we are happy to assist in any way possible. If you have questions or would like additional information, please do not hesitate to contact Mark Kohorst – NEMA's Senior Manager for Environment, Health & Safety - at 703-841-3249 or mar_kohorst@nema.org.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kyle Pitsor". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Kyle Pitsor
Vice President, Government Relations

Attachment: 2010 Letter to former CEC Chair Karen Douglas



Setting Standards for Excellence

August 2010

Karen Douglas, J.D., Chair
California Energy Commission
1516 Ninth Street, MS-33
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Introduction to the Thermostat Recycling Corporation

Dear Chairwoman Douglas:

The National Electrical Manufacturers Association (NEMA) is the primary trade association representing the interests of the US electrical products industry. Our 430 member companies supply the full spectrum of products used worldwide in the generation, transmission, distribution, control, and end-use of electricity.

In 1998, three NEMA member companies – Honeywell, White-Rodgers, and GE – voluntarily established the Thermostat Recycling Corporation (TRC), a nationwide non-profit designed to facilitate recycling of mercury-added thermostats. The TRC now has 29 corporate members and is the only national program of its kind in the US (see www.thermostat-recycle.org).

I am writing to introduce you to the TRC and its vital role in ensuring that heating, ventilation & air conditioning (HVAC) contractors and demolition workers who remove out-of-service mercury thermostats dispose of them in accordance with California law. The Mercury Thermostat Collection Act of 2008,² enacted with the support of Honeywell, the largest corporate member of the TRC, established a regulatory framework for the program aimed at increasing its effectiveness in the state. A key provision of this law is a *legal obligation* on HVAC contractors, the parties who handle end-of-life thermostats most frequently, to ensure they do not enter the solid waste stream (see Sec. 25214.8.15).

This requirement is particularly important for contractors implementing energy efficiency or HVAC replacement programs that involve upgrading old thermostats to new demand response or smart grid enabled devices. Once a mercury thermostat is removed from service, under California law that thermostat can never be re-installed and must be taken by the contractor to a recycling location. Fortunately, the TRC program provides the means for contractors to meet this requirement.

I encourage you to familiarize yourself with this industry-funded and operated program, and to share this information with relevant CEC offices and staff. The program is convenient, accessible, and virtually cost-free to participants and we are committed to working with state officials to ensure its continued success in California. If you have questions or would like additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me at 703-841-3249 or mar_kohorst@nema.org.

Very truly yours,

Mark A. Kohorst
Senior Manager, Environment Health & Safety

² Chaptered as article 10.2.2., chapter 6.5 of Division 20 of the California Health and Safety Code, relating to hazardous waste.

Cc Commissioner James D. Boyd, Vice Chair
Commissioner Jeffrey D. Byron
Commissioner Anthony Eggert
Commissioner Robert B. Wiesenmiller, Ph.D.