



Voice of the Recycling Industry

Policy Position

Adopted by ISRI on 3/22/01

Automotive Mercury Switches

To the maximum extent practicable, ISRI recommends that mercury switches be removed from end-of-life vehicles (ELVs) prior to being delivered to a scrap processing facility.

While ISRI believes that automotive dismantlers should remove mercury switches prior to sending auto hulks to scrap recycling facilities for recycling, the financial responsibility for ensuring the proper handling of mercury in ELVs should not fall on the dismantling and scrap recycling facilities. ISRI's Design for Recycling® encourages automotive manufacturers to make every effort to design mercury out of automobiles. Furthermore, to create incentives for removing mercury switches from automobiles already in commerce, ISRI believes automotive manufacturers must contribute financial and organizational resources to a mercury switch removal program. Such support should include providing relevant and available information identifying all historic and current uses of mercury as well as support for an effective collection program to ensure proper collection, transportation, handling and recycling/disposal of mercury-containing devices used in automobiles. This program should incorporate a tracking mechanism to evaluate the effectiveness of the program. ISRI believes that by participating in such a program the automotive manufacturers will gain a greater understanding of the environmental and economic effects of their design choices and will lead to broad acceptance of Design for Recycling® in the automotive industry.

Lastly, to ensure that mercury switches are properly removed prior to recycling and automotive manufacturers take responsibility for hazardous constituents used in automobiles, ISRI supports legislation that incorporates equitable concepts such as requiring mercury switches to be removed prior to delivery for recycling and obligations for automotive manufacturers to design out and/or take responsibility for, hazardous constituents in their products.