

# HOUSE RESEARCH

## Bill Summary

**FILE NUMBER:** H.F. 2602

**DATE:** March 17, 2004

**Version:** As amended by H2602DE1

**Authors:** Cox and others

**Subject:** Establishing a collection program for mercury switches in motor vehicles

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### Overview

House File 2602 requires the Office of Environmental Assistance to implement a program to remove, collect, recycle, and appropriately dispose of mercury switches in motor vehicles before the vehicles are crushed or shredded. The program is to be funded by motor vehicle manufacturers selling vehicles in the state that contain mercury switches, up to a maximum of \$300,000 annually. The program must collect at least 90 percent of the mercury switches in end-of-life motor vehicles.

The bill also requires that switches and other mercury-containing components intentionally added to a motor vehicle must be identified by the manufacturer on a label placed on the doorpost of the vehicle. The label must also indicate that switches cannot be disposed of until the mercury is removed.

#### Section

- 1 **Definitions.** Defines certain terms such as "mercury switch," "end-of-life motor vehicle," and "motor vehicle recycler."
- 2 **Mercury switch collection program.**

**Subd. 1. Office of Environmental Assistance.** Requires the Office of Environmental Assistance (OEA) to implement a program by January 1, 2005 to remove mercury

## Section

switches from motor vehicles before they are crushed or shredded and to insure that they are recycled and disposed of appropriately. Motor vehicle manufacturers who have sold new vehicles containing mercury switches in the state after January 1, 1980 are to fund the program, up to a maximum of \$300,000 annually.

**Subd. 2. Program Components.** The collection program must remove at least 90 percent of the mercury switches from end-of-life motor vehicles. The switches are to be handled, recycled and disposed of as hazardous waste, or, if applicable, as universal waste. The program must also provide appropriate containers for the switches; track switches from the point of collection to disposal; train and assist motor vehicle recyclers and others; and require a \$1 fee paid to recyclers for each mercury switch or pellet collected.

- 3 **Annual report.** Requires the OEA to report on the collection program annually to the legislative committees with jurisdiction over the environment and natural resources, beginning January 15, 2005. The report shall document the number and percentage rate of mercury switches collected (and contain a plan to increase that percentage, if necessary) and the amount of mercury collected. The report must also describe how the mercury was recycled and otherwise managed.
- 4 **Representations.** Makes it unlawful for a person to represent that mercury switches have been removed from an end-of-life motor vehicle if that is not the case.
- 5 **Labeling; products containing mercury.** Amends current law to include mercury-containing electric switches in motor vehicles as products that cannot be sold in the state without a label indicating that the item contains mercury and that it must be removed from the solid waste stream. This section adds a requirement that switches and other components containing mercury that are intentionally added to a motor vehicle - such as sensors, lights, and navigational systems - must be identified by a label placed on the doorpost of the vehicle that enables the component to be readily located for removal.
- 6 **Removal from service; products containing mercury.** Requires a motor vehicle recycler to remove all mercury switches before crushing the vehicle.