



## **Filthy Five: PPG Industries Natrium, West Virginia Plant**

PPG Industries, a publicly traded company based out of Pittsburgh, owns and operates one of the five remaining chlor-alkali facilities in the United States that still has not committed to stop using mercury-cell technology. The plant has spent millions of dollars in fines and pollution control systems, while still releasing hundreds of pounds of mercury pollution into the environment each year. Because of this record, Oceana has dubbed PPG's Natrium plant as one of the Filthy Five.

### **Key Statistics on PPG Industries, Natrium, West Virginia**

- In 2005, the plant reported emitting 400 pounds of mercury into the air, nearly twice as much as the average power plant, according to EPA Toxics Release Inventory data.
- Since 2005, PPG has been in a legal battle concerning its mercury discharges into the Ohio River. The West Virginia Environmental Quality Board ordered PPG to reduce discharges, but legal loopholes permit PPG to continue polluting well above the state's limits. If PPG is ultimately required to reduce these discharges, it could face nearly \$27.5 million in costs to comply.
- The Natrium plant has already spent more than \$13.8 million (2006 dollars) on research, development, building and maintenance of pollution control technology and waste disposal.
- There are fish consumption advisories for every body of water in West Virginia because of mercury contamination.
- The costs to control mercury pollution could have gone a long way towards paying for the conversion, which would cost approximately \$71.2 million.

### **Benefits of Switching**

- Although the cost of converting to mercury-free technology runs in the millions, analysis shows that the majority of these costs would be recouped within five years due to energy savings, increased capacity and eliminating millions of dollars in fines, upgrades and cleanups.
- Switching would increase energy efficiency by 25 percent, saving enough electricity to power 6,100 average-sized American homes, and saving the company nearly \$14.7 million over five years.
- Many plants increase capacity when they convert. Increasing capacity by 25 percent would increase PPG's sales by nearly \$82.2 million over five years. Even better, PPG could earn \$3.7 million in extra profits from increased sales due to saved electricity costs.
- PPG converted its Beauharnois, Canada plant and increased energy efficiency by 35 percent and capacity by 25 percent.
- Being a responsible citizen would benefit the company's finances, while at the same time safeguarding the health of its employees, the public and the environment.

<b>Cost to Switch:</b>	<b>\$ 71.2 million</b>
Costs of Using Mercury	\$ 13.8 million
Potential Water Treatment Bill	\$ 27.5 million
Benefits (Over 5 years)	
Energy Savings	\$ 14.7 million
Waste Disposal	\$ 2 to 3.3 million
Monitoring	\$ 2 million
Capacity Increase (Over 5 years)	
Sales	\$ 82.2 million
Energy Savings	\$ 3.7 million

*"With the tremendous strides made lately, it is becoming difficult to imagine the construction of any new plants utilizing technologies other than the new membrane cell designs... We will be able to take good advantage of membrane cells in their present state of development."*

*- - Paul J. Kienholz, PPG Industries' chlor-alkali business manager, 1983*

More than 20 years later, PPG continues to use outdated mercury-cell technology.

The four other chlorine plants that have not committed to going mercury-free are Ashta Chemicals in Ashtabula, Ohio; Olin Corporation's plants in Charleston, Tenn., and Augusta, Ga.; and ERCO Worldwide in Port Edwards, Wis.