

POISON PLANTS:

[CHLORINE FACTORIES ARE A MAJOR GLOBAL SOURCE OF MERCURY]

[STOP
SEAFOOD
CONTAMINATION]



GEORGIA

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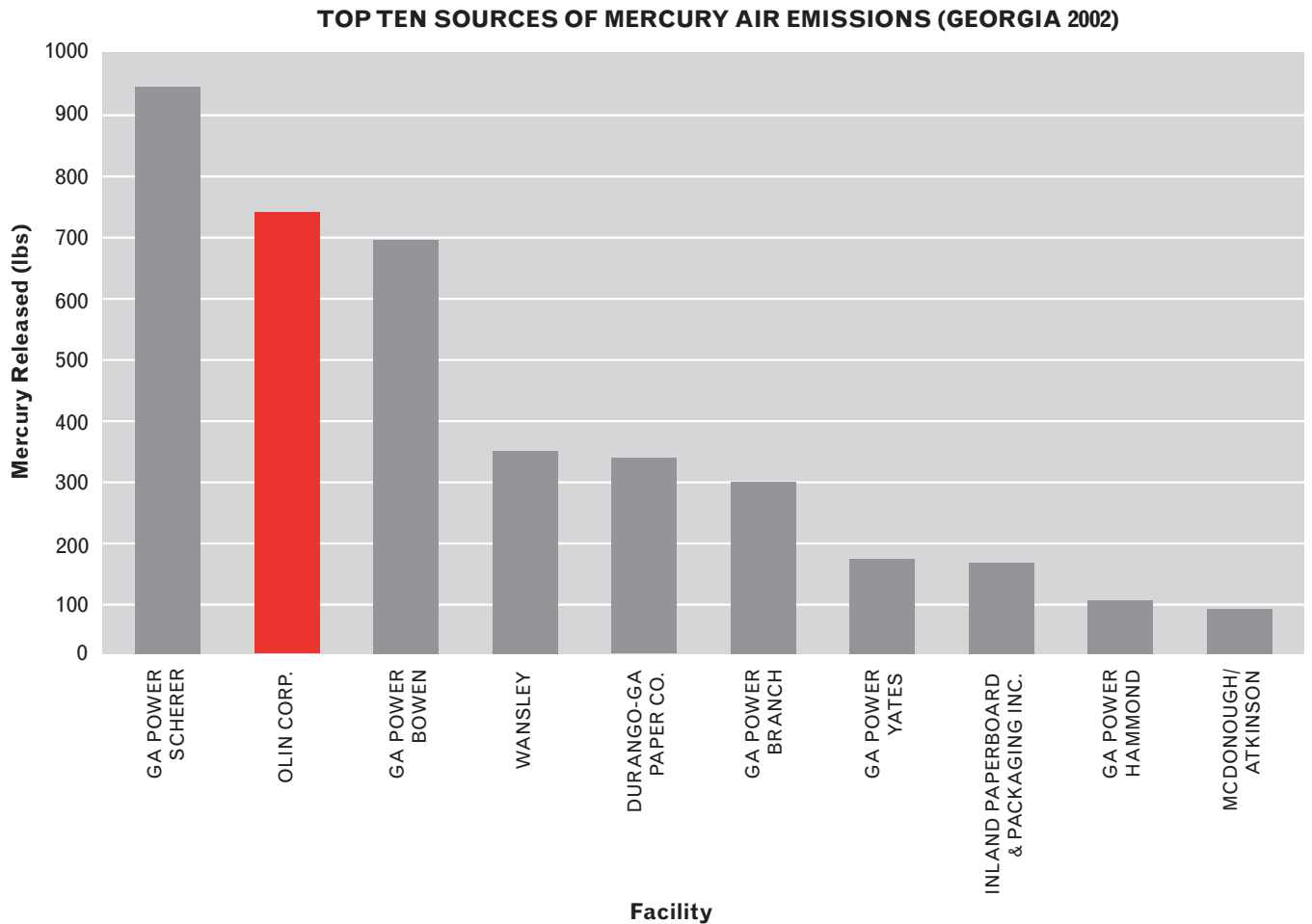
The only mercury-cell chlorine plant still operating in Georgia is the second largest single source of mercury pollution in the state.¹⁹⁶

The Olin Chemicals plant is located in Augusta, Georgia, near the Savannah River.¹⁹⁷

Key statistics for Olin's Augusta plant (in 2002)¹⁹⁸

- #2 source of mercury released to the air in Georgia
- #2 source of total mercury pollution in Georgia
- Responsible for 17% of mercury released to air in Georgia
- #39 source of mercury released to the air in the United States
- #69 source of total mercury pollution in the United States
- RCRA hazardous waste Corrective Action Site¹⁹⁹

In 2002 this plant released 739 lbs (336 kg) of mercury to the air and 6.7 lbs (3.0 kg) into the water and disposed of 282 lbs (128 kg) off-site (primarily to landfills). Of the air emissions, 585 lbs (266 kg) of the mercury came from fugitive emissions while only 154 lbs (70 kg) were measured and released as stack emissions.²⁰⁰



Source: Oceana based on EPA Toxics Release Inventory Data

Mercury Contamination

This Olin plant has leaked and released enough mercury into its surrounding environment to qualify as a RCRA Corrective Action Site.²⁰¹ Throughout 2003 and 2004, the plant failed to monitor waste releases to groundwater as required by its RCRA permit.²⁰²

Additionally, LCP, a division of Hanlin Group (Allied) operated a mercury-cell plant in Brunswick, GA from 1957 to 1994. The Brunswick site, the majority of which is tidal marsh, is a Superfund site.²⁰³ EPA estimates that more than 380,000 pounds (over 170,000 kg) of mercury were “lost” in the area during the period of operation of the plant.²⁰⁴ Mercury and polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) have been detected in aquatic life at levels sufficient to produce a ban on commercial fishing in these areas and a seafood consumption advisory for part of the river and all of the creek.²⁰⁵

2004 Mercury-Related Fish Advisories²⁰⁶

Georgia issued 178 fish consumption advisories – relating to 40 different rivers and 34 lakes and ponds.

Near the Olin plant, in the Savannah River Basin, there were 24 advisories, affecting five rivers and seven lakes and ponds.

In the Purvis Creek area near the Brunswick Superfund site, Georgia currently recommends eating no more than one meal per week of red drum, and one meal per month of blue crab, spotted seatrout, Southern kingfish (whiting), and sheepshead, due to mercury contamination.²⁰⁷ These recommendations are based on data collected in 2002, three years after EPA excavated the vast majority of on-site soil and waste piles.²⁰⁸ The previous year's (2003) consumption guidelines based on ecological data collected in 1995 were more restrictive (for example, it was not safe to eat red drum), which indicates that mercury levels may have decreased following the cleanup.²⁰⁹ The state also has issued mercury warnings for the whole estuary (St. Simon's Estuary).

Georgia, Florida and South Carolina jointly issued an advisory recommending that no one eat king mackerel more than 39 inches long (15–17 lbs.), and that pregnant women, nursing mothers and children restrict their consumption of smaller fish (33–39 inches) to one meal per month. The states also recommended that other adults limit their consumption of smaller King Mackerel (33–39 inches) to one meal per week.