



# Connecticut Coalition for Environmental Justice

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July 7, 2016

Mr. Robert Klee  
Commissioner  
Department of Energy & Environmental Protection  
79 Elm Street  
Hartford, Connecticut 06106-5127

Dear Commissioner Klee:

We, the undersigned civil rights, religious, health, and environmental organizations hereby request that you do your part to enforce your department's requirements to protect human health and the environment from exposure to mercury from dental amalgam.

Amalgam is a dental filling that is 50% mercury – a well-known neurotoxin and pollutant. This mercury is released into waterways where it bioaccumulates in fish which, when consumed by pregnant women and children, present a risk to the developing brain and immune system.

Unlike most states, the state of Connecticut mandates that only mercury amalgam fillings be placed in molar teeth in adult Medicaid patients. At the same time, the State requires dentists to prominently display a brochure explaining the pros and cons of amalgam and the availability of mercury-free dental filling:

“Each dental office shall make available to patients information about mercury-amalgam fillings and possible alternatives. At a minimum, the brochure Fillings: The Choices You Have, Mercury Amalgam and Other Filling Materials shall be displayed and remain prominently displayed in each office.”

But a recent survey detailed in the report *Mum About Mercury: What Dentists Are Not Telling Patients About Their Filling Choices* shows that many amalgam-using dentists are failing to display this brochure in their waiting rooms and their front office staff does not have it to offer patients.

This raises environmental, safety, and civil rights concerns as explained in the report. With the Department of Social Services now requiring many Medicaid recipients to get amalgam, it is more critical than ever that the state protect their rights by enforcing its amalgam brochure requirement. To enforce the amalgam brochure requirement, the report recommends that the state:

- (1) Write dentist to remind them of their duty to display the brochure,
- (2) Conduct random inspections to ensure that the brochure is displayed, and
- (3) Develop and publish on its website its enforcement procedures and actions.

We hereby request that you do your part to enforce these requirements. Thank you for your attention to this important issue.

Sincerely,

Cynthia Jennings, Esq.  
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City of Hartford

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Executive Director  
Clean Water Action

Michael Bender  
Director  
Mercury Policy Project

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