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TougherTalk

Monsanto supports new proposal to tighten mercury emission regulations

BOISE (AP) — The Idaho Board of Environmental Quality has voted to pursue new rules that would toughen state regulations for emission of mercury.

The 5-0 vote Wednesday comes five months after the board rejected a similar petition sought by environmentalists. But this time, the move to develop tougher regulations had the support of Monsanto Corp., the state's biggest industrial source of mercury pumped into the atmosphere.

Environmental groups, led by the Idaho Conservation League, have argued for years the state needed tougher regulations on mercury because it can accumulate in fish and poses health risks to babies and children.

The board's decision sets in motion the process to write new rules. Even though new rules approved by the board are subject to legislative approval, they go into effect unless both houses vote them down.

