

Trump administration eases limits on coal plants for emitting mercury, other toxins

BY MICHAEL PHILLIS AND DYLAN LOVAN ASSOCIATED PRESS

LOUISVILLE, Ky. — The Environmental Protection Agency on Friday weakened limits on mercury and other toxic emissions from coal-fired power plants, the Trump administration's latest effort to boost the fossil fuel industry by paring back clean air and water rules.



Charlie Riedel/AP Photo

The Jeffrey Energy Center coal-fired power plant operates near Emmett, Kan. on Jan. 25, 2025.

Toxic emissions from coal- and oil-fired plants can harm the brain development of young children and contribute to heart attacks and other problems in adults. The plants are also a major source of greenhouse gas emissions that drive climate change. The EPA announced the repeal of the tightened Mercury and Air Toxics Standards rule, or MATS, at a massive coal plant next to the Ohio River in Louisville, Kentucky.

"EPA's actions today rights the wrongs of the last administration's rule and will return the industry to the highly effective original MATS standards that helped pave the way for American energy dominance," said EPA Deputy Administrator David Fotouhi. The agency said the change should save hundreds of millions of dollars.

The final rule reverts the industry to standards first established in 2012 by the Obama administration that have reduced mercury emissions by nearly 90%. The Biden administration had sought to tighten those standards even further after the first Trump administration had moved to undermine them.

Operators of the Mill Creek Generating Station gave agency officials a tour of the coal plant before hosting the announcement inside.

Coal-fired power plants are the largest single human source of mercury pollutants. Power plants release the mercury into the atmosphere, which then falls in rain or simply by gravity, entering the food chain through fish and other items that people consume.

Environmental groups said the tightened rules have saved lives and made communities that live near coal-fired

power plants healthier. But industry groups argued that the tougher standards, along with other rules that limited emissions from coal plants, made operating them too expensive.

They accused the Biden administration of piling on so many requirements that it would drive a rush of plant retirements.

"For too long, the entire coal supply chain has been the target of bad and onerous environmental regulations," said Michelle Bloodworth, CEO of America's Power, a coal industry group. "Repealing the 2024 MATS rule and today's actions are an important step for maintaining a reliable and affordable supply of electricity and ensuring that coal-based generation can continue supporting the nation's economy and the electric grid."

The coal industry's outlook has changed dramatically in the last year.

In March, the EPA promoted the "biggest deregulatory action in U.S. history," announcing their intention to peel back dozens of environmental protections. The Biden administration's focus on climate change was over — EPA Administrator Lee Zeldin said the actions marked "the death of the 'green new scam.'" Fossil fuel rules were big targets, including major efforts to reduce carbon emissions from coal plants and mandate greenhouse gas reporting. The Trump administration has also extended deadlines for dozens of coal-fired power plants to comply with certain Clean Air Act rules.

Beyond fewer environmental

protections, the Trump administration has issued emergency orders halting the planned shutdown of several coal plants. Officials say the plants produce consistent power during major storms or at other times when need is high. Removing coal would reduce the grid's reliability, especially at time when a rush of new data centers is demanding more than ever from the grid, they say. Officials have dismissed concerns about higher customer costs from keeping coal plants operating, their plentiful emissions and their significant contribution to climate change.

And earlier this month, the EPA revoked a finding that climate change is a threat to public health, which has long been the basis for U.S. action to regulate greenhouse gas emissions. Recently, President Donald Trump hosted a group of coal miners who honored him as the "Undisputed Champion of Beautiful, Clean Coal."

Activists say favoring coal makes little sense at a time when renewables are cleaner, cheaper and reliable.

Gina McCarthy, who headed the EPA under former President Barack Obama, said the Trump administration will be remembered for helping the coal industry at the expense of public health.

"By weakening pollution limits and monitoring for brain-damaging mercury and other pollutants, they are actively spiking any attempt to make America - and our children - healthy," said McCarthy, who is also the chair of the climate action group America Is All In.



Butch Dill/AP Photo

Auburn guard Keyshawn Hall (7) blocks the shot of Kentucky forward Mouhamed Dioubate (23) during the first half of an NCAA college basketball game on Saturday in Auburn, Ala.

Murphy, Freeman help Auburn end skid while dealing Kentucky third straight loss 75-74

BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

AUBURN, Ala. — KeShawn Murphy totaled 25 points and 10 rebounds, and Elyjah Freeman tipped in a miss with 1.4 seconds left as Auburn ended a five-game losing streak by handing Kentucky a third straight loss, winning 75-74 on Saturday night.

Tahaad Pettiford made two free throws with 14 seconds left to pull Auburn within a point. Kentucky turned it over, but Mouhamed Dioubate blocked an attempted layup by Kevin Overton at the other end. Murphy missed on the first tip, but Freeman came through on the second. The Wildcats mishandled the inbound pass and didn't get a shot off.

Murphy made 9 of 14 shots, including his only 3-point attempt, and all six of his free throws for the Tigers (15-12, 6-8 Southeastern Conference). He also blocked a pair of shots on the way to his fifth double-double. Freeman had 11 points off the bench. Overton and Keyshawn Hall both scored 10 with Hall adding nine rebounds and seven assists.

Otega Oweh totaled a career-high 29 points and seven rebounds to pace the Wildcats (17-10, 8-6). Denzel Aberdeen added 15 points and Collin Chandler scored 10.

Oweh had a dunk and a three-point play in a 7-0 run over the final 2:31 of an evenly played first half and the Wildcats took a 39-35 lead into halftime.

Another Oweh dunk upped

Kentucky's advantage to 46-37 early in the second half. Murphy had two straight layups and Pettiford followed with a 3-pointer as Auburn used a 10-2 spurt to cut it to 48-47 with 12:31 remaining.

Murphy again had back-to-back layups before adding two free throws in a 12-0 run and the Tigers moved in front 57-53 with 7:34 left.

Kentucky battled back and used two free throws and a dunk by Oweh, and two free throws by Aberdeen in a 6-0 run to take a 74-71 lead with 18 seconds left.

UP NEXT

Kentucky: At South Carolina on Tuesday.

Auburn: At Oklahoma on Tuesday.

LEGAL NOTICE

The Shelby County Fiscal Court and the Shelby County Detention Center will be accepting sealed bids to sub-contract a medical provider for healthcare services at our facility. These services must provide 24/7 healthcare to all inmates committed to the custody of the Shelby County Detention Center. The detention center is a 317-bed facility.

The scope of general services expected will include providing evaluation of an inmate beginning on his/her arrival and choosing an adequate physical placement in our facility. It will also be to provide professional medical, dental, mental health and other related services such as laboratory and radiology to the extent of a regular physician and/or specialist care, emergency care and hospitalizations, when necessary.

The medical provider shall provide pharmacy services and medical records management, along with administrative support services. Proposals must be received, via sealed envelope, at the Shelby County Detention Center, 1000 Bobby Waits Lane, Shelbyville, KY 40065, ATTN: Sandra Ashcraft, Shelby County Jailer, no later than Thursday, March 12, 2026 at 10:00 am. The bids will be opened on Thursday, March 12, 2026 at 11:00 am. at the Shelby County Detention Center, 1000 Bobby Waits Lane, Shelbyville, KY 40065.

Bid selected to be approved at the Shelby County Fiscal Court meeting on Tuesday, March 17, 2026.

Late proposals, facsimiles, or telephone bids will not be considered. Shelby County Fiscal Court reserves the right to accept the bid deemed by it to be in its best interest, not necessarily the lowest bid; the right to disqualify bids from bidders not deemed to be qualified; the right to disqualify bids deemed to be defective, and the right to waive defects in bids where such defects are not deemed significant.

Shelby County Fiscal Court is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

LEGAL NOTICE

NOTICE OF PASSAGE
Ordinance No. 02-17-01
SHELBY COUNTY, KENTUCKY
AN ORDINANCE RELATING TO FIRE SAFETY STANDARDS IN SHELBY COUNTY

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE FISCAL COURT OF SHELBY COUNTY, KENTUCKY, AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1. ADOPTION OF STANDARDS
SECTION 2. GENERAL REGULATIONS
SECTION 3. MAJOR SUBDIVISIONS
SECTION 4. KNOX BOX REQUIREMENTS
SECTION 5. EMERGENCY RADIO COMMUNICATION SYSTEMS (BDA REQUIREMENTS)
SECTION 6. PENALTIES AND REMEDIES
SECTION 7. EFFECTIVE DATE

This Ordinance shall become effective immediately upon its passage by motion and seconded reading after two readings at meetings of the Shelby County Fiscal Court and publication as required by the Kentucky Revised Statutes.

I hereby certify that Ordinance No. 02-17-01, SERIES 2026, was enacted and adopted by the Fiscal Court of Shelby County, Kentucky, on February 17, 2026, and the foregoing summary is a true and accurate summary of said Ordinance, and its further certified that the foregoing summary was prepared by the undersigned, the duly elected Shelby County Attorney and a licensed: practicing attorney of the Commonwealth of Kentucky.

/s/ Carrie McIntyre
Shelby County Attorney
Date: February 17, 2026

LEGAL NOTICE

NOTICE OF PASSAGE AND SUMMARY OF ORDINANCE
CITY OF SHELBYVILLE ORDINANCE NO. 2026-02-19

AN ORDINANCE ENACTING TEXT AMENDMENTS TO ARTICLES II, VI AND VIII OF THE CITY OF SHELBYVILLE ZONING REGULATIONS RELATING TO MOBILE FOOD PREPARATION VEHICLES, MOBILE FOOD PREPARATION VEHICLE PARKS, MICRO-BREWERIES AND MICRO-DISTILLERIES

This Ordinance revises the Shelbyville Zoning Regulations by adding new definitions to Article II ("Terms and Definitions") which define Mobile Food Preparation Vehicles and Mobile Food Preparation Vehicle Parks; by making revisions to Article VI ("Establishment of Zones"), and more specifically Table 6.01 therein, listing the zones in which Mobile Food Preparation Vehicles and Mobile Food Preparation Vehicle Parks may operate, and by removing the warehouse zone from the list of zones in which Micro-Breweries and Micro-Distilleries may operate; by adding a new Section 833 to Article VIII ("General Zone Regulations for Lots and Yards") which establishes the zoning regulations that apply to Mobile Food Preparation Vehicle Parks; and by completely revising the provisions in Section 891 of Article VIII, including the establishment of zoning regulations that apply to Mobile Food Preparation Vehicles.

The full text of this ordinance may be reviewed at Shelbyville City Hall, 315 Washington Street, Shelbyville, Kentucky 40065.

I hereby certify that a true and accurate summary of the foregoing Ordinance was read at meetings of the City Council of the City of Shelbyville on February 5, 2026 and February 19, 2026, and that the Ordinance and its summary were prepared by the undersigned, a duly licensed practicing attorney of the Commonwealth of Kentucky.

/s/ Steven C. Gregory, Shelbyville City Attorney
Date: February 19, 2026

DO YOU LIKE TO WRITE ABOUT LOCAL SPORTS?

The Sentinel News is currently looking for an individual who would like to become a **SPORTSWRITER** for the weekly publication.

Most of the coverage would revolve around the schools in Shelby County.

We have a full-time position open. Work would be for up to 40 hours per week and there are weekend and night assignments throughout the year.

- A qualified candidate must have reliable transportation with insurance. A camera would also be needed as stories would require photographs.
- A degree is not necessary, although it would be preferred. We are looking for someone who likes sports and who likes telling a story to our readers.

If you think you might be interested, email a brief resume and any questions to: editor@pioneernews.net as soon as possible.

Paxton Media Group is an equal opportunity employer.

If you would like to work as a part-time writer or a correspondent, please respond by email, also.

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