



Household Mercury Search

This Mercury Search check sheet can help you locate mercury-containing items in your home. Using this Mercury Search, you can go through your home placing a check mark by the items you find that contain mercury. Do this Mercury Search as a reminder that the mercury-containing items should be recycled, not disposed of in the trash. These items should also be kept out of reach of children. Make sure that any unnecessary mercury-containing items are removed from your home and recycled properly.

- _____ Thermometers with silver-colored liquid inside.
- _____ Thermostats – non-electronic.
- _____ Fluorescent and other mercury vapor lighting -- HD (high intensity discharge), metal halide, high-pressure sodium and neon bulbs.
- _____ Automotive headlamps- blue tint when lit.
- _____ Pilot light sensors in some gas appliances: stoves, ovens, clothes dryers, water heaters, furnaces, space heaters.
- _____ Gauges -- barometers, manometers, blood pressure and vacuum gauges with silver-colored liquid.
- _____ Switches and relays in some chest freezers, pre-1972 washing machines, Sump and bilge pumps, electric space heaters, silent light switches, vehicles and farm equipment.
- _____ Clothes irons with automatic or tilt shut-offs.
- _____ Elemental mercury -- silver-colored liquid metal sometimes found in children's chemistry sets.
- _____ Vintage toys -- toy drawing screens and mercury maze games.
- _____ LA Gear athletics shoes -- made before 1997 with flashing lights in soles.
- _____ Batteries- mercuric oxide and some alkaline batteries.
- _____ Paint -- latex manufactured before 1990, and some oil base-paints; check the label.
- _____ Thimerosal or merbromin- in some antibacterial products.

What to do with mercury-containing items

Do not throw mercury-containing items into the trash. NEVER pour liquid mercury down the drain. It finds its way into the environment. Take mercury-containing items to recycling locations identified by the Allen County Solid Waste Management District.

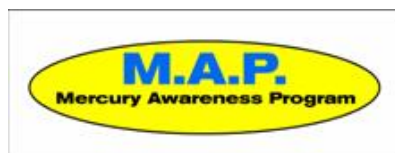
The District may be reached at:

<http://www.acwastewatcher.org/> or at (260) 449-7878

Additional information about household mercury and pollution prevention is available at:

www.in.gov/idem/recycle/2348.htm

or contact the Indiana Department of Environmental Management
at 800-988-7901



Preventing Mercury Pollution At Home



If you are a baby-boomer, you may remember playing with liquid mercury in the chemistry lab.

Today we know that mercury is highly toxic to humans and can damage the liver, kidneys and brain. If swallowed, it can affect the central nervous system. Unborn babies and children are especially sensitive to mercury toxicity. Mercury does not break down to less toxic forms in the environment and accumulates in the bodies of humans, fish and other animals.

Because mercury is a liquid at room temperature and because it easily evaporates into the air, it can enter the environment very easily. A very small amount of mercury can cause a big problem. Just 3 grams of mercury can contaminate a 60 acre lake. A typical mercury thermometer alone contains ½ to 2 grams of mercury.

Once mercury is in the environment, it can be very difficult to clean up. It spreads easily and stays around for a long time. About two-thirds of the mercury found in the environment today is there because of human activity. Mercury is released as pollution when coal is burned in electric generating plants. It also comes from industrial processes and from improper disposal of household products that contain mercury. It is believed that much of the mercury in rivers and streams is actually deposited there from this airborne pollution.

For small spills (less than the amount in a thermometer)

- ☒ Remove everyone from the area where cleanup will take place. Shut door of impacted area. Turn off ventilation system. Remember to remove all pets as well.
- ☒ Mercury can be cleaned up easily from surfaces such as wood, linoleum, and tile.
- ☒ Put on rubber or latex gloves.
- ☒ If there are any broken pieces of glass or sharp objects, pick them up with care. Place objects on a paper towel, fold the towel and place it in a zip lock bag. Seal and label the bag.
- ☒ Locate visible mercury beads. Use a squeegee or cardboard to gather mercury beads. Use slow sweeping motions to keep mercury from becoming uncontrollable.
- ☒ Use an eyedropper to collect or draw up the mercury beads. Slowly squeeze the mercury onto a damp paper towel. Place the towel into a zip lock bag, seal and label.
- ☒ After removing larger beads, use duct tape to collect the smaller beads. Place the tape into the bag as well.
- ☒ The bag and its contents can be disposed of with the Allen County Solid Waste Management District (ACSWMD).
- ☒ If a spill occurs on carpet or upholstery, cut and remove the affected portion of the item for disposal. Contact the ACSWMD for assistance with these items. See other side for contact information.

Want to help prevent mercury pollution? Here are some simple steps:

- Learn about common products that contain mercury.
- Make a list of the products in your home that contain mercury using the [Household Mercury Search](#) checklist on the other side of this sheet.
- Avoid buying products that contain mercury, except for fluorescent light bulbs. Fluorescent bulbs use less electricity than incandescent bulbs, but must be disposed of properly.
- Keep mercury containing items out of the trash. Use appropriate disposal methods or recycle mercury containing products.