

MERCURY SPILLS AND DISPOSAL

WHEN LIQUID (ELEMENTAL) MERCURY IS SPILLED, IT FORMS BEADS OR DROPLETS THAT CAN ACCUMULATE IN THE TINIEST PLACES. THESE DROPLETS CAN EMIT VAPORS INTO THE AIR THAT WE CANNOT SEE OR SMELL. BREATHING MERCURY VAPORS CAN BE VERY DANGEROUS.

The following types of bulbs contain mercury:

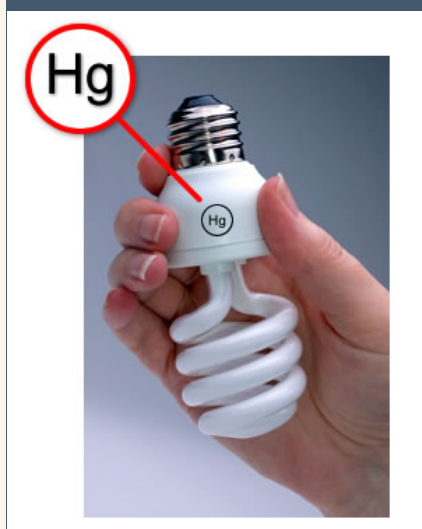
- Fluorescent, black lights
- Ultraviolet bulbs
- Neon bulbs
- High intensity discharge bulbs (HID)

The following are HID bulbs:

- mercury vapor
- metal halide
- high pressure sodium
- HID lighting is also used in vehicle headlamps

Other items that contain mercury:

- Older thermometers
- Older thermostats
- Older barometers



Newer non-digital fever thermometers often use alcohol or a non-toxic compound that looks similar to mercury.

Ask:

- Is the liquid in the thermometer any color other than silver? Then it is most likely alcohol.
- Is it silver? Then it may be mercury or possibly a non-mercury substance.

What NEVER to Do After a Mercury Spill

- Do not use a vacuum cleaner or broom to clean up mercury.
- Do not pour mercury down a drain.
- Do not walk around if your shoes might be contaminated with mercury.
- Do not allow children to help you clean up the spill.



What TO DO After a Mercury Spill

- Have everyone else leave the area, both people and pets .
- Open all windows and doors to the outside; shut all doors to other parts of the house.
- Mercury can be cleaned up easily from the following surfaces: wood, linoleum, tile and any similarly smooth surfaces.
- If a spill occurs on carpet, curtains, upholstery or other absorbent surfaces, these items should be discarded in accordance with Hazardous waste disposal means shown below.

- Using disposable gloves, carefully pick up broken glass and place in a puncture resistant container.
- Place all objects into a sealable bag.
- Locate visible mercury beads. Use a squeegee or cardboard to gather mercury beads into small balls. Use slow sweeping motions to keep mercury from becoming uncontrollable.
- Gently push the beads onto a plastic dust pan or draw them into an eye dropper.

- NEVER place mercury spill cleanup materials or mercury containing items in the trash.
- Contact the Clark County Recycling District for Hazardous waste disposal.
 - (812) 256-7942.
 - 112 Industrial Way Charlestown, IN 47111
- There is a small fee for disposal of Elemental mercury: \$1.31/lb. and Mercury devices: \$6.81/lb.

If you have further health questions or have experienced mercury exposure, then please call your local poison control center at 1 (800) 222-1222.

For more info:

https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/mercury/docs/Residential_Hg_Spill_Cleanup.pdf

<https://www.epa.gov/mercury/what-do-if-you-spill-more-mercury-amount-thermometer>

<https://www.in.gov/idem/health/common-environmental-health-threats/mercury>