

MERCURY & WASTE WATER TREATMENT

Mercury was once thought of as the magical liquid metal that attracted kids to play with it and scientists to extensively analyze it for potential beneficial uses. Modern technology and science has dramatically changed the manner in which mercury is viewed. Testing for mercury started out by analyzing data in parts per million, then parts per billion and now part per trillion. Each level is 1,000 times lower than the previous. To put that into perspective one part per trillion is one part of a substance per 1,000,000,000,000 parts. An Olympic size swimming pool hold 660,000 gallons of water and one part per trillion would be approximately one drop of water in the pool.

Modern medical research and lower detection limits have revealed previously unknown health hazards of mercury. Mercury affects the human brain, spinal cord, kidneys and liver. Long term exposure can lead to personality changes, stupor and coma. Children are more sensitive to mercury and are more likely to have serious effects from exposure to mercury.

Many household items contain mercury:

- Thermometers. Buy non-mercury (alcohol) thermometers.
- Thermostats. Replace mercury thermostats (the round style) with digital thermostats.
- Fluorescent lights. These lights save a lot of energy and reduce the amount of electricity generated by coal burning power plants (source of mercury vapor) but must not be broke and recycled appropriately. Switching to LED bulbs eliminates mercury containing fluorescent bulbs.
- Lighted tip-ups for ice fishing, automobile hood and truck lights, switches for chest freezer lights, automatic shut-off switches for irons, space heaters, washing machines and outboard motors, and sump pump / septic system floats.

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources has required the Village of Salem Lakes Utility District to sample the treated water discharged by the waste water treatment plant for mercury. The samples are analyzed four time per year with a detection limit of 0.150 parts per trillion. Results are reported to the WDNR as required in the Utility District's Discharge Monitoring Permit. The WDNR has imposed mercury limits on our discharged water into the Fox River. The Village must conduct a pollutant minimization program to reduce the levels of mercury in our discharged water. Any additional requirements imposed on the Utility District would ultimately lead to increased expenses and potentially increased sanitary sewer user fees. Some simple roles you can play to prevent this from happening are:

- DO NOT PUT MERCURY DOWN THE DRAIN OR TOILET
- Conserve on energy to reduce mercury vapor released from coal burning power plants
- Identify and label products in your home that contain mercury. Have the products recycled or disposed of at a hazardous waste drop off site or special collection.

MERCURY RECYCLERS

Fluorescent Lamp Recyclers

Dynex Environmental, Inc.
6801 Industrial Loop
Greendale, WI 53129
TX: (800) 249-3310
TX: (414) 421-4959

Environmental Solutions
PO Box 791
Wausau, WI 54402-0791
TX: (800) 779-3050

Lamp Recyclers, Inc.
712 Packard Drive
PO Box 10794
Green Bay, WI 54307-0794
TX: (800) 558-1166
TX: (414) 592-1166

Light Cycle
6801 Industrial Loop
Greendale, WI 53129
TX: (800) 249-3310

Mercury Waste Solutions, Inc.
21211 Durand Avenue
Union Grove, WI 53182-9711
TX: (414) 878-2599
TX: (414) 878-2699

Recycling Technologies, Inc.
11930 W. Silver Spring Drive
Milwaukee, WI 53225
TX: (414) 536-5166

Fluorescent Bulbs & ANY/ALL Mercury Containing Devices

Superior Special Services
1275 Mineral Springs Drive
Port Washington, WI 53074
TX: (414) 284-6855

US Ballast
PO Box 1443
Wausau, WI 54402
TX: (800) 715-5267
TX: (715) 845-0188

Wisconsin Ballast, Inc
W193S6817 Hillendale Drive
Muskego, WI 53150
TX: (414) 679-2080
TX: (414) 679-4748