



Hazardous Waste Disposal Procedures-

Mercury Waste Disposal

Reference: **06.01.18**

Date: *April, 2001*

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Scope

This procedure applies to the disposal of mercury waste found in thermometers and as a result of mercury spills.

Mercury Waste includes:

- Thermometers broken or unbroken
- Mercury spill cleanup

Purpose

This procedure specifies the proper disposal of mercury waste in order to ensure the safety of workers and staff, and compliance with the Waste Management Act, Special Waste Regulation.

Background

1. Waste mercury may be regulated as Class 6 Toxic Substance of Class 8 Corrosive Substance, as defined by the BC Special Waste Regulations, BC Reg 63/88, Feb 18, 1998.
2. GVRD Sewer Use Bylaw No. 164. June 1990 and BC Special Waste Regulation, BC Reg 63/88, Feb 18,1998. Restrict the discharge of waste mercury into the sewer or landfill.
3. Any spills of mercury into the environment (land, air, water, sewer) must be reported to the Provincial Emergency Program, (contact 582-5200 for more information or see Spill Reporting Procedures, Reference No. 06.02.01 June 1998, UBC Department of Health Safety and Environment).

Procedure

1.0 Mercury Thermometers (Unbroken or Waste)

If no mercury has spilled and the thermometers are intact, put into a glass or plastic bottle. Label the bottle “Mercury Thermometers for Disposal” and list it on your next Chemical Waste Inventory Form sent to Environmental Service Facility for approval.

2.0 Broken Mercury Thermometers or Mercury Spill.

1. Report the spill to a supervisor; if necessary, contact HSE for further assistance.
2. Evacuate all personnel from area if spill is large, the room is small and ventilation is poor.
3. Wear appropriate personnel protective equipment such as lab coat, rubber or latex or vinyl gloves, plastic boot protectors, splash goggles and half-mask respirator with approved cartridge for mercury vapours (self contained breathing apparatus may be required if spill is large,

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temperature is elevated, and/or site of spill is in an enclosed space with poor ventilation).

4. Ventilate area as much as possible: i.e. open all windows.
5. Mark off spill area with signs, barriers or tape.
6. If spill is on a flat, even smooth surface, use two pieces of firm straight edge paper, (i.e. copying paper) and slowly guide the droplets together into a pool.
7. Use glass pipette with rubber ball to suck up the mercury and collect it in the smallest size possible bottle (glass or plastic) with a tightly fitting lid. Label the bottle with "Mercury waste".
8. For picking up tiny droplets in cracks or uneven surfaces, use pieces of metallic Zinc rinsed in 10% HCL. Run the Zinc along the cracks and touch visible droplets directly with it. Add used Zinc pieces to "Mercury waste" bottle.
9. To neutralize unreachable mercury in crevices etc., drizzle area with Sulphur flour or spray with Merconvap.

To obtain Zinc or Sulphur, call Ron Aamodt at: 822-6303.

To obtain Merconvap, call George Gunn at: 822-6849.

10. List "Waste Mercury" on your next Chemical Waste Inventory Form to be sent to ESF for approval.

Revisions New procedure

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