



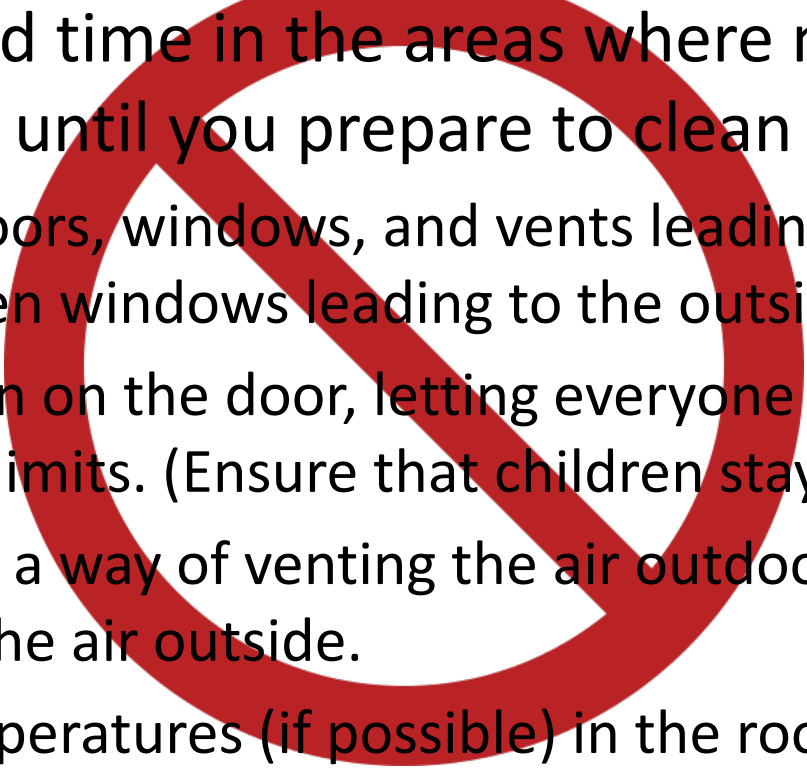
Mercury Disposal Method

Prepared for you by
The City of Kings Mountain

In the event you come in contact with mercury, please follow these procedures to ensure safe handling and disposal methods.



Step 1: Leave the room while you plan.

- Do not spend time in the areas where mercury has been spilled until you prepare to clean it up.
 - Close all doors, windows, and vents leading to other rooms; open windows leading to the outside.
 - Leave a sign on the door, letting everyone know that the area is off-limits. (Ensure that children stay away)
 - If you have a way of venting the air outdoors, turn on a fan and blow the air outside.
 - Lower temperatures (if possible) in the room to reduce the spread of the vapors.
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Step 2: Call a professional for large spills

- If more than 2 tablespoons (30 milliliters) have been spilled, the spill should be handled by a professional. This is about the size of a pea, or the amount in one mercury thermometer. If the spill is smaller, skip to the next step. Otherwise:
 - Check your local yellow pages or search online for “Hazardous waste cleanup,” “environmental engineers,” or “engineering services” in your area that you could hire.
 - If the mercury was spilled outdoors, phone our local, state, or natural environmental response team.



Step 3: Put on gloves, old clothing, old shoes, and remove jewelry.

- Wear rubber, nitrile, latex, or vinyl gloves whenever handling mercury. Wear old clothes and shoes, as you may need to throw them away afterward. Mercury can react to metal, so make sure you remove all jewelry and piercings, especially gold.
 - If you do not have a spare pair of disposable shoes, put your shoes in a sturdy plastic bag and fix them to your ankle with rubber bands.
 - If you have safety goggles, put them on.



Step 4: Sprinkle area with powdered sulfur (optional)



- This is not necessary for small spills. Some hardware stores have mercury cleanup kits. The powder makes the cleaning task easier.
- The powder will turn brown in contact with mercury, it binds to the mercury, which makes cleaning easier.

Step 5: Place small objects in a puncture-proof container

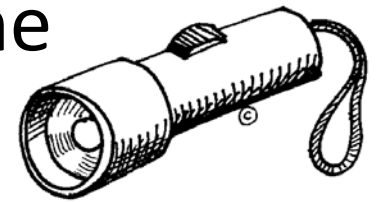


- Carefully place pieces of broken glass or other small objects that have come into contact with mercury. Place these in a disposable puncture-proof container such as a sharps container or glass jar.
- If no such container is available, place pieces inside zip-lock bag and insert bag into another zip-lock bag. Fold all broken material inside of a paper towel before placing in the bag.
- Leave tiny pieces of broken glass alone for now. We'll handle those later.

Step 6:

Locate and gather visible beads

- Use index cards, small pieces of cardboard, or a disposable squeegee to slide beads of mercury along hard surfaces, into one location.
- Dim the lights and hold a flashlight low to the floor to locate more mercury. Check the entire room because mercury can scatter far.



Step 7: Transfer mercury with a eyedropper.

- Use an eyedropper to pick up beads of mercury.
- Slowly squeeze the beads into a damp paper towel, fold the paper towel, and place it inside a zip-lock bag.
- Dispose of properly.



Step 8: Pick up tiny beads and shards of glass

- Wrap sticky tape around your gloves fingers, with the sticky side out, carefully pick up the contaminates and place the tape inside a zip-lock bag. Dispose of properly.
- Alternatively, dab shaving cream onto a disposable paint brush. Use the brush to pick up mercury. Dispose of the paint brush along with the mercury.



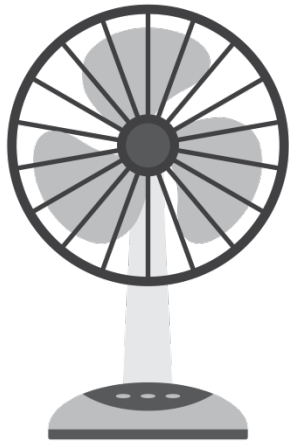
Step 9: Bag all contaminated clothing and tools.

- Place all clothing, shoes and tools that could be contaminated with mercury.



Step 10: Continue to ventilate to the outside for 24 hours.

- Leave windows to the outside open for 24 hours after cleanup.
- Keep children and pets away from the contaminated area during this time.



Step 11: Seal and label bags/containers that contain mercury waste.

- Tightly seal all containers which contain mercury waste.
- Clearly label those containers
 - “Mercury Waste Disposal, DO NOT OPEN”
 - Check epa.gov/mercury/mgmt_options.html for materials that you’re unsure about containing mercury. This site will give you a list of household items that contain mercury.



Step 12: Find a location to dispose of the mercury waste.

- Visit search.earth911.com and enter the type of object you are recycling, and your city or zip code. A list of nearby addresses should appear that can recycle your mercury waste.
- If you cannot find a nearby recycling center, search online for an "environmental regulation office" or "environmental health department" in your area that can inform you about legal disposal requirements. If you have a large amount of mercury to dispose of, you may be required to dispose of it through a professional or government cleanup service.



If you have any questions regarding mercury disposal, please contact:

City of Kings Mountain

Water Department

@

(704)734-4531

References:

[Wikihow.com](https://www.wikihow.com)

[Epa.gov/mercury/mgmt_options.html](https://www.epa.gov/mercury/mgmt_options.html).