



# WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT MERCURY. PROTECT YOUR HOME AND FAMILY.



## IF THERE'S A SPILL

All mercury spills, regardless of size, should be cleaned up immediately and carefully. If the amount spilled is more than two table-spoons, contact the National Response Center at 1-800-424-8802. If a spill is less than two tablespoons:

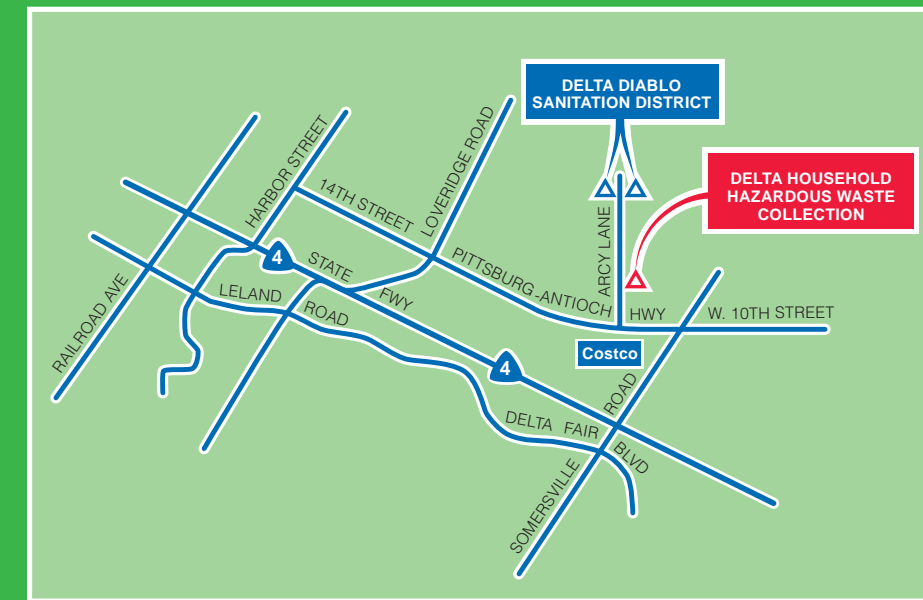
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| <b>Do ...</b> keep all pets and children away from the immediate area                  | <b>Don't ...</b> use a vacuum cleaner or a broom to clean up mercury    |
| <b>Do ...</b> wear rubber or latex gloves when cleaning up a spill                     | <b>Don't ...</b> pour mercury down the drain                            |
| <b>Do ...</b> use cardboard, a squeegee or an eyedropper to gather and draw up mercury | <b>Don't ...</b> wash mercury-contaminated items in the washing machine |
| <b>Do ...</b> properly ventilate the spill area (turn off heaters, and turn up the AC) | <b>Don't ...</b> walk around – your shoes could be covered with mercury |
| <b>Do ...</b> put clean-up materials in a sealable container                           |   |

Bring mercury-contaminated items to the Delta Household Hazardous Waste Collection Facility.

## DID YOU KNOW?

- ◆ Mercury is a naturally occurring liquid metal
- ◆ In its gaseous state, mercury is colorless and odorless
- ◆ A broken thermometer is the most common exposure to mercury
- ◆ Mercury salts are used in skin-lightening creams, antiseptic creams and ointments
- ◆ Mercury is a toxic substance that is very harmful to humans
- ◆ 41 states, including California, have issued fish-consumption advisories due to mercury contamination
- ◆ Larger fish have higher concentrations of mercury than smaller fish

For more information about mercury, visit [www.ddsd.org](http://www.ddsd.org)



Protecting your family, your health and our water.



**Delta Household Hazardous Waste Collection Facility**

2550 Pittsburg-Antioch Highway, Antioch, CA 94509  
Open Friday and Saturday from 9:00 am - 2:00 pm. Call for holiday hours.  
North of Highway 4, on Arcy Lane, between Loveridge and Somerville Roads.

Communities served: Antioch, Bay Point, Bethel Island, Brentwood, Byron, Discovery Bay, Knightsen, Oakley & Pittsburg



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# WHAT IS MERCURY?



Mercury is a naturally occurring element that can be found throughout the environment. Human activities – such as burning fossil fuels and hazardous waste, and the improper disposal of mercury-containing products – have greatly increased the amount of contamination in the environment.

## WHERE IS MERCURY FOUND AROUND THE HOUSE?

Mercury can be liquid or gaseous. In both forms, it's just as dangerous. You can find mercury in...

- ◆ fluorescent light bulbs
- ◆ glass thermometers
- ◆ some older light switches
- ◆ older household thermostats
- ◆ some metallic jewelry
- ◆ children's shoes (with flickering lights)
- ◆ some toys with flashing lights
- ◆ clothing irons
- ◆ some clock pendulums
- ◆ older oil-based paints
- ◆ button batteries (watch-type batteries)

Fluorescent and High-Intensity Discharge lamps (HID) are excellent energy-efficient choices because they can use up to 50 percent less electricity.

However, used fluorescent and HID lamps must be disposed of properly because they contain mercury.

### It's okay to use fluorescent lights!

New compact fluorescent light bulbs last longer and use only 25 percent of the energy as incandescent bulbs.

## THE DANGERS OF MERCURY

Mercury is a highly toxic metal that is harmful to both humans and wildlife. Exposure to even small amounts of mercury, over a long period of time, may cause negative health effects including damage to the brain, kidneys and lungs.

Unborn and young children are especially susceptible to mercury exposure because their nervous systems are still developing. Whether it is absorbed through the skin, inhaled or ingested, exposure to mercury should be taken very seriously.

Brief contact with high levels of mercury may cause immediate health effects:

- ◆ Nausea
- ◆ Abdominal cramps
- ◆ Diarrhea
- ◆ Eye irritation
- ◆ Loss of appetite
- ◆ Fatigue
- ◆ Insomnia
- ◆ Weight loss
- ◆ Skin rashes
- ◆ Muscle tremors

## PROPER STORAGE AND DISPOSAL

Proper storage and disposal of mercury-containing products will greatly reduce the risk of exposure in your home. Store products containing mercury in a safe place to prevent breakage.

Carefully handle and dispose of those products by taking them to a household hazardous waste facility near you. East County residents can bring mercury and other household hazardous wastes to the Delta Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) Collection Facility for free and proper disposal.

Watch for community events in your area that sponsor free disposal of mercury-containing products or other household hazardous wastes.

The Delta HHW Collection Facility also accepts the following items for free disposal:

- ◆ Household cleaners
- ◆ Pesticides
- ◆ Paints
- ◆ Pharmaceuticals

For more information visit [www.ddsd.org](http://www.ddsd.org) or call 925-756-1990.