

Where Can I Get Assistance?

The following organizations have extensive experience working with schools to remove mercury:

Northeast Waste Management Officials' Association (NEWMOA), 617-367-8558
www.newmoa.org/prevention/mercury

South Central Recycling Association of Massachusetts (SCRAM), 508-867-9491

Cuoco and Cormier, (603) 882-1812
www.cuocoandcormier.com/Environmental.html

They will work with you to plan and implement a mercury clean-out, help select alternative equipment, and hire an environmental services company to remove the mercury.

You can also hire an environmental services company directly. For recommendations on companies to hire, consult with:

- other schools that have done mercury clean-outs
- your school's hazardous waste hauler
- the Massachusetts statewide hazardous materials collection contract*

*The Commonwealth has a contract for hazardous waste management for public sector use. Although the contract is not available for the private sector, the contracting process pre-qualifies experienced vendors who hold required licenses and are in compliance with state and federal laws. Vendors on contract until 10/7/07 are:

- Clean Harbors, Inc.
(contact Bob Smith at 800-282-0058 x3419)
- Triumvirate Environmental
(contact Tom Aicardi at 800-966-9282 x213)

Do I Have to Remove Mercury Products from Classrooms?

No, but by switching to the many safer non-mercury alternatives that are now available, you can considerably reduce the risks of mercury exposure from breakage and spills.

Where Can I get Information on Non-Mercury Replacement Equipment?

See vendor list for non-mercury products:
www.mass.gov/dep/service/schools.htm
and scroll down to Mercury Management.

For More Information:

Visit: www.mass.gov/dep/service/schools.htm
and scroll down to Mercury Management.

www.newmoa.org/prevention/mercury/schools
For specific questions, call Tina Klein
617-292-5704



Massachusetts
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PROTECTION

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Getting Mercury Out of Schools

Guidance for Private and Parochial Schools in Massachusetts

Many products containing mercury are used in classrooms and nurses' offices, such as thermometers, barometers, and blood pressure units. Mercury is a potent neurotoxin that is particularly harmful to children. When these products break, mercury can be released into the air and be breathed by students, teachers, and staff. Mercury spills are also costly to clean up.

With suitable alternatives for nearly every mercury-containing product available, it's simply not worth the risk to your school to keep mercury equipment. Read inside for guidance to help you start ridding your school of mercury.

Which Classrooms Use Mercury Products?

Science classrooms and laboratories typically use the most mercury equipment. Mercury is also found in vocational classrooms (e.g., in plumbing, HVAC, nursing and dental programs). Nurses' offices may also have mercury blood pressure cuffs and fever thermometers. For a detailed inventory, consult: "Making Massachusetts Schools Mercury-Free," available at:

www.mass.gov/dep/service/schools.htm
(Scroll down to Mercury Management)



Massachusetts Law now prohibits schools from purchasing mercury and mercury products for classroom use.

How should Mercury be Removed Safely?

Be sure that your consultant/contractor:

Thoroughly inventories all science classrooms and laboratories, and vocational classrooms

Consults with appropriate teachers during the inventory of each classroom to identify all mercury products

Safely collects mercury equipment by wrapping it in plastic and placing it in non-breakable, sealable containers

Clearly labels all containers as containing mercury wastes

Does not remove barometers from walls until a drum or other large container is available for safely packing the equipment

Stores the collected mercury in a safe area, in coordination with your facilities staff

Has a mercury spill clean-up kit on hand in the event of a breakage or release

Uses a licensed hazardous waste facility for recycling the mercury

Provides you with a certificate of recycling proving that the mercury waste has been properly managed

What Should I Look for in an Environmental Services Company?

Selecting a company with experience removing mercury from schools is important to ensure it does a thorough job and does not put your school community at risk. Consider the following factors in choosing a company:

- Technical capability
- Experience and references
- Environmental compliance history
- Up-to-date permits
- Indemnity protection
- Price and comprehensiveness of services

Keep in mind that you are responsible for ensuring that your waste is properly managed after it leaves your school. The federal Resource Conservation and Recovery Act assigns responsibility for proper management of hazardous waste to the generator of the waste as well as the transporter and recycling or disposal facility. We advise you to hold on to any proof of recycling, such as invoices and certificates of recycling, for three years.

Fluorescent and HID Bulbs

Fluorescent and High Intensity Discharge (HID) bulbs contain a small amount of mercury that is essential to their operation. Continue to use these energy efficient bulbs, but be sure to recycle them when they burn out.

