

**Mercury is widely present in consumer products, and in many cases, less toxic or non-mercury products are available.**

## **Sample Resolution for Mercury-Free Purchasing**

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A resolution encouraging the purchase of alternatives to products containing mercury.

WHEREAS mercury is a particularly hazardous chemical that does not degrade in the environment; and

WHEREAS once mercury is released into the air it can travel long distances before depositing on water and land with rain or snow, where it pollutes the environment; and

WHEREAS once mercury is ingested by living organisms it can increase in concentration as it is carried up the food chain to fish, animals and humans; and

WHEREAS mercury can cause damage to the nervous system, brain and kidney as well as many other debilitating health effects; and

WHEREAS mercury contamination has led to fish consumption advisories in over 80 Massachusetts waterbodies and in over 2,500 waterbodies in 47 states; and

WHEREAS the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and the New England states have made mercury elimination a priority; and

WHEREAS mercury is widely present in consumer products, and in many cases, less toxic or non-mercury alternatives are available; and

WHEREAS purchasing non-mercury products helps reduce the amount of mercury that eventually enters the waste stream, thereby limiting its adverse impacts on the environment; and

WHEREAS purchasing non-mercury products helps protect the health and safety of the public, workers and students; now, therefore

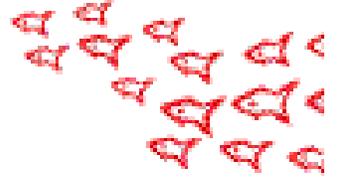
Be It Resolved: That the *(Your School)* will purchase non-mercury products whenever possible. In cases where a non-mercury alternative is not available or practicable, the School will purchase products containing less mercury where possible. In cases where no non-mercury alternatives are available, the School will include clauses in its purchasing contracts to encourage product manufacturers to take back and recycle used mercury-containing products, and/or commit to recycling these products whenever possible.



# Sample **Mercury** Purchasing Policy

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In June of 1998 then Massachusetts Governor Paul Cellucci, as Co-Chair of the Conference of the New England Governors and Eastern Canadian Premiers, adopted a Regional Mercury Action Plan with the goal of virtually eliminating anthropogenic (human-made) releases of mercury to the environment. In July 2000, Environmental Affairs Secretary Bob Durand, Department of Environmental Protection Commissioner Lauren Liss, and Department of Public Health Commissioner Howard Koh released the Massachusetts Zero Mercury Strategy, which stated the goal of virtually eliminating both the use and the release of anthropogenic mercury.



Mercury is toxic to the nervous system, especially of children. Mercury contamination across the state has resulted in fish consumption advisories on over 80 waterbodies in Massachusetts, along with a statewide advisory for pregnant women, women of childbearing age, and children under the age of 12.

As a result of the known environmental and health impacts of mercury, and existing state and regional policies, *(Your School)* will not knowingly purchase any product containing mercury, unless the product is required for school operation and no non-mercury alternative is available, or is part of an energy-efficient lighting system. Should no non-mercury product be available, the school will arrange a take-back or recycling agreement with the vendor or a third party. The item containing mercury will be labeled as such and recycled or disposed of in a responsible manner at the end of its useful life.