



Recyclers

Find local, regional, and national recyclers of amalgam, lead foil, and silver fixer on the IDEQ website at the following link: <https://www.deq.idaho.gov/media/60176718/handling-dental-waste.pdf>



Dental Office Pollution Prevention of Mercury



The City of Nampa's Wastewater Division is launching a voluntary campaign to promote pollution prevention practices to minimize mercury discharges into the Nampa sewer system.

Vacuum lines, sinks, and toilets in your office all lead to Nampa's wastewater treatment facility, which clean the water before discharging it into Indian Creek and ultimately the Boise River. The City now has stricter permit requirements to further reduce the amount of mercury discharged into Indian Creek. Metals, such as mercury, are normally unaffected by treatment processes, so the most effective way to reduce mercury pollution is to reduce the amount of mercury entering the treatment facility. Dental facilities are a large contributor of mercury to the wastewater stream, therefore the City is requesting the help of dental facilities to implement Best Management Practices (BMPs) to reduce mercury pollution.

More Information

For more information on dental office pollution prevention, Best Management Practices, and requirements under Idaho law please refer to the following.

American Dental Association www.ada.org

Idaho Department of Environmental Quality www.deq.idaho.gov/dental-assistance

Idaho State Dental Association www.theisda.org/landing.aspx

US Environmental Protection Agency www.epa.gov/mercury/dentalamalgam.html

For further information, please contact

City of Nampa Wastewater Division
at (208) 468-5840

Best Management Practices

There are several ways that a dental facility can contribute mercury to a wastewater treatment system. Dental waste streams that may contain mercury include:

- Cuspidor (spit bowl)
- Saliva Ejector
- Mixing and tool cleaning wastes
- Elemental or bulk mercury
- Used amalgam caught on the chair-side trap (Contact Amalgam)
- Amalgam sludge that settles in a vacuum pump trap
- Non-contact amalgam (scrap)
- Amalgam capsules

However, through proper operation and maintenance of treatment units, dental facilities can achieve nearly complete elimination of mercury in their discharges to the collection system. The following voluntary best management practices (BMPs) will help maintain water quality in Indian Creek and the Boise River, contributing to the overall health of communities in the Treasure Valley.

DO

- Do use precapsulated alloys and stock a variety of capsule sizes.
- Do salvage, store and recycle any type of amalgam waste.
- Do use chair-side traps to retain amalgam and recycle the content.
- Do clean vacuum pump filters once a month or as directed by the manufacturer.
- Do recycle contents retained by the vacuum pump filter or other amalgam collection device, if they contain amalgam.
- Do appropriately disinfect extracted teeth that contain amalgam restorations by storing them in a container of glutaraldehyde or 10% formalin and recycle along with the chair side trap waste.
- Do use line cleaners that minimize dissolution of amalgam.
- Do properly label and store your hazardous waste.
- Do maintain a log of amalgam waste generation and recycling, collect and keep receipts from your recycler.

DON'T

- Don't use bulk mercury, don't ever pour it down the drain, in infectious waste containers (red bags) or regular garbage.
- Don't put any type of amalgam (including teeth with amalgam) in the garbage, red bag, or down the drain.
- Don't rinse devices that contain amalgam over drains or sinks.
- Don't flush amalgam waste down the drain or toilet.
- Don't use bleach or chlorine containing cleaners to flush wastewater lines
- Don't mix waste streams.
- Don't assume your waste is handled correctly. Ask for a Certificate of Recycling or Disposal.



When choosing companies to recycle or dispose of hazardous waste, ask the following questions:

1. What wastes are accepted?
2. What are the packaging requirements? Are packaging materials provided?
3. Does the company have an EPA identification number and the appropriate permits to transport off site for treatment, storage, and disposal of hazardous waste? Hazardous waste must be recycled on site or transported off site for treatment, storage, and disposal by a permitted hazardous waste management company.
4. Is a hazardous manifest needed for the shipment? A hazardous waste manifest may be required with off-site shipments of hazardous waste. A manifest is a multiple copy document signed by the waste generator and transporter when the waste is picked up. It is signed every time the waste changes hands. Finally, a representative of the waste disposal or recycling facility signs the manifest. The final copy is then returned to the generator as proof that the waste reached the proper disposal/recycling destination.
5. Does the company have insurance to cover accidental spills? Insurance is the first layer of protection for your business in case of an accident resulting in spills, injury, or property damage.
6. What is the cost for services? If it is a recycling service, does it return or keep recycled products? Choose among reputable waste management companies for the best deal. Pay for good service, not necessarily a brand name.
7. Is the company willing to negotiate a contract that fits the office's needs?
8. Does the company follow Idaho Transportation Department (ITD) requirements? Contact the ITD at (208) 334-8000 for more information on these requirements. The waste management company should have copies and procedures to ensure these requirements are met.