



Recyclers

Find local, regional, and national recyclers of hazardous materials, chemicals, mercury, and other metals on the IDEQ website at the following link: <https://www.deq.idaho.gov/media/1074/deq-recycling-guide.pdf>



More Information

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

Idaho Department of Environmental Quality:

<https://www.deq.idaho.gov/media/1074/deq-recycling-guide.pdf>

<http://www.deq.idaho.gov/mercury-pollution-prevention>

<http://www.deq.idaho.gov/media/1118484/chemical-roundup-mercury-fs.pdf>

US Environmental Protection Agency www.epa.gov/hw

World Health Organization www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/health-care-waste

For further information, please contact:

City of Nampa Wastewater Division
at (208) 468-5840 or
wwtp@cityofnampa.us

Medical 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. Medical facilities are a large contributor of mercury to the wastewater stream, therefore the City is requesting the help of medical facilities to implement Best Management Practices (BMPs) to reduce mercury pollution.

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Best Management Practices

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

- Disinfectants (Thimerosal)
- Incinerators
- Laundry
- Research Facility Discharge
- Pharmaceuticals (anesthetics, antiseptics)
- Medical Equipment (barometers, sphygmomanometer, thermometers, dilators)
- Medical Laboratories (gram iodine, reagents and buffer solutions)

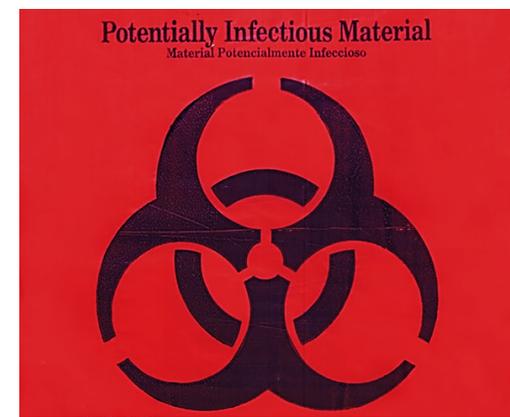
However, through proper operation and maintenance of treatment units, medical facilities can achieve nearly complete elimination of mercury in their discharges to the collection system. The following voluntary best management practices (BMPs) will help maintain water quality in Indian Creek and the Boise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

DO

- Do properly label and store your hazardous waste.
- Do double bag any item containing liquid mercury and place in a non-breakable container.
- Do train personnel on preventing accidental exposure and management.
- Do maintain a log of mercury inventory, storage and recycling.
- Do maintain a Mercury spill kit in case of accidental release or spills.
- Do use non-mercury alternatives whenever available such as thermometers or blood pressure cuffs.
- Do designate sinks as “Sanitary Use Only – No Chemical Disposal”

DON'T

- Don't assume your waste is handled correctly. Ask for a Certificate of Recycling or Disposal.
- Don't use bulk mercury, don't ever pour it down the drain, in infectious waste containers (place first in red hazard bags) or regular garage.
- Don't use bleach or chlorine containing cleaners to flush wastewater lines.
- Do NOT use latex gloves as mercury can penetrate latex. Nitrile gloves are safer.
- Don't ignore the health risks associated Mercury contact, even in small amounts.
- Don't dispense mercury thermometers to patients.



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.