

# Mercury and Renovation/ Energy Upgrades

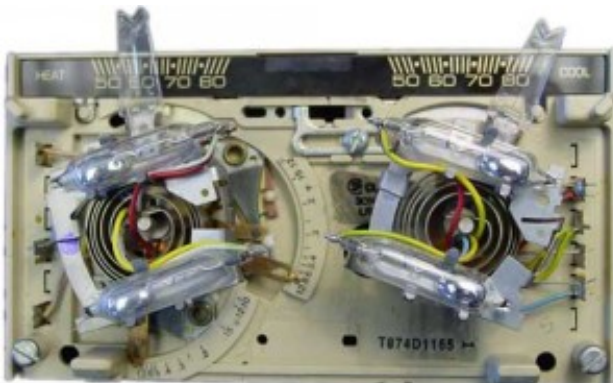


Liquid mercury can be found in\*:



**Sling Psychrometer**  
(for measuring humidity)

Note: The bill for a recent cleanup in a private home where a window company used such a device was over \$50,000.



**Thermostats**

\*Other items may contain liquid mercury - these are just a few examples. For more items that contain mercury visit: <http://www.epa.gov/glnpo/bnsdocs/hgsbook/>

What you need to know

## Protect you, your co-workers', and your clients' health

Did you know that if liquid mercury is released, it will begin to change from that silvery liquid to an odorless, invisible vapor?

Breathing too much of this vapor can harm you and the occupants in the building.

If you bring it home on your clothing, shoes, or tools, the mercury may harm your family.

Please use the telephone numbers on the next page to call and get free one-on-one advice.

## Your Obligations

If your business finds or causes a mercury spill, there may be reporting, cleanup, and disposal requirements.

Contact the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ)

- Environmental Assistance Hotline at 1-800-662-9278 for general questions and information.
- Pollution Emergency Alert System (PEAS) at 1-800-292-4706 to report a mercury spill.

## Mercury Spills and Heat or Hot Surfaces

Mercury may spill in an area that is hot, such as an oven or furnace, and be an immediate danger. Shut off the heat sources, ventilate if possible, and leave the area.

Call a hazmat team to ensure there are no unsafe levels of mercury vapor present.

## What do I do if mercury spills?

- **Isolate it:** Have all unnecessary persons carefully leave the contaminated area; close all air returns, vents, and registers in the room; don't walk through the spilled mercury.
- **Prevent exposure:** Lower the heat; exhaust room air to outdoors, if practical; remove contaminated clothing and keep contaminated tools separate from clean ones; call for advice.
- **Report it:** Building management, insurance companies, and regulators may need to know.
- **Get it cleaned up the *right* way by the *right* people:** Call the local or state health department or hazmat team for advice or assistance; professional cleanup companies may be needed.



## Mercury Spills



Sometimes bad things happen when you least expect it.

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Home renovators were removing a floor and discovered a jar of spilled mercury in the crawlspace. The local hazmat team requested assistance from EPA to address the spill. Several other containers of chemicals were found during the cleanup.

Contractors conducting renovation work at a hospital cut into a wall and went through an undocumented pipe that had been used in store thermometers, releasing mercury into the room. The hospital hired a professional cleanup company and the local health department provided oversight to protect public health.

## For More Information:

### Worker Questions:

Contact Michigan Occupational Safety and Health Administration (MIOSHA), Consultation, Education, and Training Division at (517) 322-1809 for more information about protecting worker health.



### Regulatory Requirements:

For information about regulatory requirements, contact Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ), Environmental Assistance Hotline at 1-800-662-9278.



### Public Health Questions:

Contact the Michigan Department of Community Health (MDCH) Toxics Hotline for one-on-one guidance for protecting others at 1-800-MI-TOXIC (648-6942) or visit [www.michigan.gov/mercury](http://www.michigan.gov/mercury) for these other fact sheets:



- Mercury and Plumbing
- Mercury and Electrical Work
- Mercury and HVAC Systems

For more information about mercury recycling, visit [www.michigan.gov/mercuryp2](http://www.michigan.gov/mercuryp2).  
To learn more about waste recycling, visit [www.michigan.gov/greenconstruction](http://www.michigan.gov/greenconstruction).  
For more information about mercury in fish, visit [www.michigan.gov/eatsafefish](http://www.michigan.gov/eatsafefish).