



Sectors that May Use Mercury

Michigan Department of Environmental Quality

Sources of Mercury

Contents

Automobiles.....	3
Demolition	3
Healthcare/Medical	4
Mercury-Containing Products.....	4
Schools	5

Automobiles

Mercury is used in automotive applications for various items such as lighting, antitheft systems, antilock brakes and air bags. These mercury switches should be removed before the crushing of any vehicle to ensure proper mercury handling and recycling (pollution prevention).

- [Removing and Recycling Automotive Mercury Switches](#) (pdf)
- [Removing and Recycling Automotive Mercury Switches](#) - Spanish version (pdf)
- [Mercury Switch Recycling Program](#) (ELVS)
- [Mercury Switch Removal Video: "The 48 Second Solution"](#) (50MB)

Michigan Automotive Switch Studies

- [Auto In-Service Mercury Switch Review](#) (pdf)
- [MI Mercury Switch Study](#) (pdf)
- [End of Life Vehicle Solutions](#)
- [National Vehicle Mercury Switch Recovery Program \(NVMSRP\)](#)

Proceedings for the Mercury Switch Informational Meeting (2005)

- [Overview of Mercury: Fate in the Environment and Associated Concerns](#), Joy Taylor Morgan, MDEQ
- [Mercury Releases From Steel Recycling and Production: Federal Regulations and Programs](#), Alexis Cain, Region 5 Mercury Coordinator, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
- Department of Environmental Quality Mercury Reduction Programs:
 - [Atmospheric Sources](#), Air Quality Division, MDEQ
 - [Water Sources](#), Water Bureau, MDEQ
 - [Pollution Prevention](#), Environmental Science and Services Division (ESSD), MDEQ
- [The M2S2 Experience - Preventing Mercury From Entering Wastewater](#), Corky Overmeyer, Director, Environmental Services Department, City of Grand Rapids
- [The M2S2 Experience - Tales From a Clean Sweep Site](#), Tom Dewhirst, Kalamazoo County
- [End of Life Vehicle Solutions](#)
- [National Vehicle Mercury Switch Recovery Program \(NVMSRP\)](#)

Demolition

- [Before you Tear it Down, Get the Mercury Out](#)

Dental

- [Dental Mercury Environmental Issues](#)
- [Michigan Mercury Dental Legislation](#)

Health Care/Medical

- [Reducing Mercury Use in Health Care \(NEWMOA\)](#)
- [Best Management Practices for Hospital Waste](#)
- [Sustainable Hospitals](#)
- [Health Care without Harm: Mercury](#)
- [Mercury Use Reduction and Waste Prevention in Medical Facilities](#)
- [EPA Mercury Site](#)

Mercury-Containing Products

Household items may contain mercury. To avoid exposure to mercury vapors one should educate themselves in proper care and handling of these items, along with the correct way to dispose and recycle them. Listed below are links providing information on common household items containing mercury, and mercury-free alternatives.

- [Is your Home Mercury Free? \(pdf\)](#)
- [Get Rid of Mercury Safely](#)
- [Waste Reduction Fact Sheet](#)
- [Thermometers](#)
- [Thermostats](#)
- [Mercury Use Tree](#)
- [Waste Reduction and Proper Waste Management of Products Containing Mercury](#)
- [Electric Lamp Recycling](#)
- [IMERC Fact Sheets](#)
- [Consumer and Commercial Products](#)
- [Substance Flow Analysis of Mercury in Products](#)
- [MASCO Mercury Products Database](#)
- [Consumer Products Known to Contain Mercury & Alternatives](#) (Word document)
- [Wisconsin Mercury Sourcebook](#) - community resources

Municipal

- [POTW Mercury Inventory Checklist](#)
- [Blueprint for Mercury Reduction](#) - WWTP sources from the collection system

Industrial

- [Electrical Work](#)
- [HVAC Systems](#)
- [Plumbing](#)
- [Renovations & Energy Updates](#)
- [Sources of Mercury in Industrial Facilities](#)
- [A Guide to Mercury Reduction in Industrial and Commercial Settings](#)

Schools

Mercury is used in many items found in schools, such as barometers, switches, thermostats, lighting, and in chemistry and science labs. The most common ways that spills occur in schools are from people not handling these items properly and not storing the items correctly. The following web sites provide information on what Michigan is doing to remove mercury from schools, along with mercury-free alternatives.

- [Mercury Spills in Schools](#)
- [Mercury in Schools](#)
- [Mercury and Chemical Management in Schools](#)
- [Educational Classroom Activity](#)
- [Mercury Use in School Classrooms: Summary and Assessment of Non-Mercury Alternatives](#) (pdf)
- [Senate Bill #1262--Revised school code](#) (pdf file)
- Kids Video: "[Mission Mercury](#)." This video was produced by a group of students in cooperation with folks at the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation.
- ["Don't Mess with Mercury"](#)

Schools – Mercury Phase-out

Over the past several years, numerous mercury spills have been documented in schools, sometimes costing as much as \$250,000 to clean up. The high cost and dangers to those exposed have prompted widespread public concern about mercury. As these stories became more widely known, the incidents prompted the Michigan Legislators to take action.

According to [Public Act 376](#) of 2000 (Enrolled [Senate Bill #1262](#)), Michigan schools must phase out mercury use in the classroom and in the health (nurse's) office. This law applies to liquid (free flowing) elemental mercury, as well as, mercury-containing instruments, such as thermometers, barometers, manometers, and sphygmomanometers (blood pressure gauges). Schools have until 2004 to complete this process.

Other mercury uses potentially found in the building, such as in thermostats, light switches, relays, or fluorescent lights, are **not** impacted by this legislation.