

WHY CARE ABOUT MERCURY?

Mercury is toxic

Mercury is a naturally occurring element. At room temperature it is a liquid that can vaporize quickly into the air.

Mercury levels have increased in our air, water, land, fish we eat, and physical bodies.¹ These increases are caused mostly by activities such as mining – domestically and overseas – that release mercury into the air, water, and soil. However, improperly disposing of household items containing mercury also directly and negatively impacts us.

Mercury is permanent

Mercury is easily absorbed into our bodies and the environment. It gets into our waterways and poisons the wildlife, including fish we catch and eat for food.

Mercury is considered a ‘forever’ element because once it is introduced, it cannot be removed.

Mercury Poisoning

Mercury poisoning is the result of being exposed to too much mercury, either through diet or environment.

There is no cure.

Symptoms depend upon the type and duration of exposure and may include tremors, mood changes, slurred speech, hearing and vision loss, as well as severe organ damage.

¹ State of Oregon “DEQ Mercury Reduction Strategy”

MERCURY DISPOSAL

Lane County Household Hazardous Waste Collection Center
lanecounty.org

Includes florescent bulbs and batteries.

City of Springfield’s annual Spring Cleanup event
bit.ly/SpfldORCleanUp

MERCURY RESOURCES

EPA Mercury Information
epa.gov/mercury

Oregon Poison Control Center
1.800.222.1222. For emergencies: 911
ohsu.edu/oregon-poison-center

NON-MERCURY RECYCLING

Electronics Recycling

NextStep Recycling
nextsteprecycling.org

Goodwill Industries
goodwill-oregon.org

St. Vincent de Paul
svdp.us

Other Recyclers

Lane County Information
lanecounty.org/recycle

Springfield Information
bit.ly/spfldrecycle



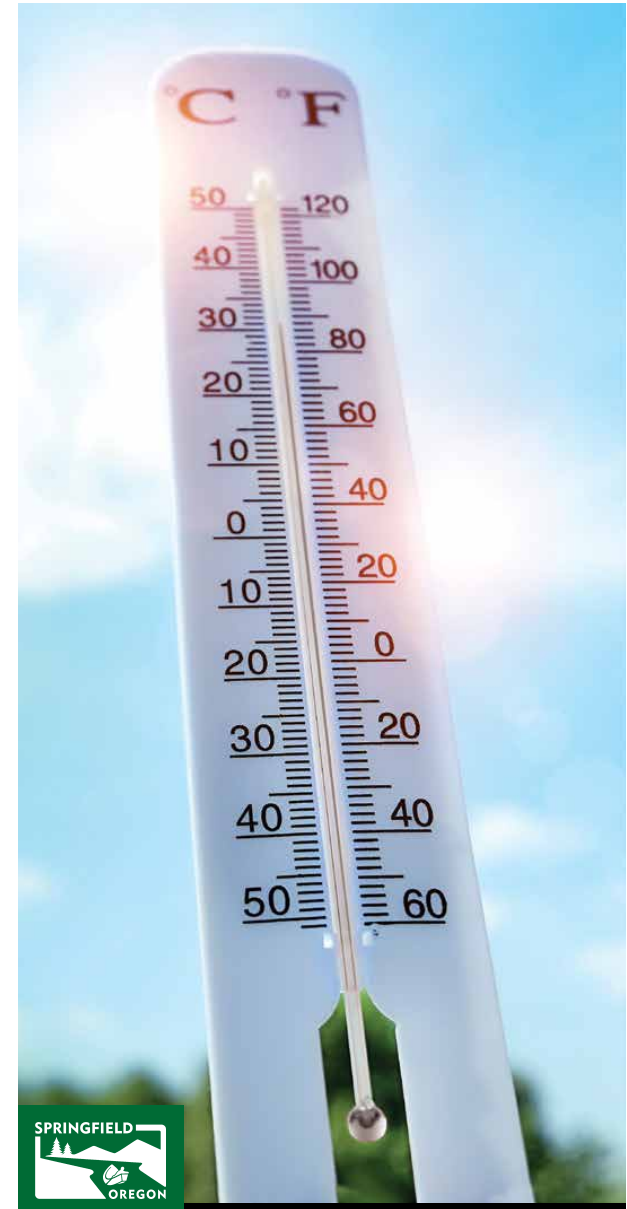
Stormwater Team
Environmental Services Division
Development & Public Works Department
City of Springfield, Oregon

WaterResources@springfield-or.gov
SpringfieldStreams.org • 541.726.3694

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 **CITYOFSPRINGFIELDOREGON**
 **CITY-OF-SPRINGFIELD**

MERCURY RISING

We all can help keep this ‘forever’ element out of our environment and our bodies – including our water bodies.



TIPS

TO KEEP MERCURY OUT OF OUR ENVIRONMENT

- 1 Replace household items that contain mercury with alternatives (see table).
- 2 Recycle compact fluorescent lights, paint, and pesticides at the **Lane County Household Hazardous Waste Collection Center** or a local lighting store.
- 3 Recycle appliances and button-cell batteries instead of throwing them out.
- 4 Bring small items containing mercury (excluding paint and pesticides) to the Stormwater Team at Springfield City Hall and receive a free digital thermometer. Phone or email ahead at 541.726.3694 or waterresources@springfield-or.gov.
- 5 Drop off mercury-containing items at Springfield's annual **Spring Clean Up**. We accept appliances, switches, building materials, and more (excluding paint and pesticides).



HOW TO TELL IF IT CONTAINS MERCURY

Please review the table to the right to see where mercury is most commonly used and your options for alternatives.

ALTERNATIVES TO ITEMS CONTAINING MERCURY

Today there are many alternatives to household products that once contained mercury. To make sure you're living mercury free, please review this list, consider the age of the products you have, and properly dispose of anything suspicious, replacing it with a mercury-free alternative.

Product Category	Specific Use/Application	Mercury-free Alternatives
BATTERIES <i>Replacements started 1996</i>	Button cell, silver oxide	Mercury-free units
	Button cell, zinc air	
	Alkaline manganese (manganese dioxide)	
	Mercuric oxide	
	Button Cell, Mercuric oxide	
	Button Cell, zinc carbon	
ELECTRICAL/ELECTRONIC DEVICES <i>Replacements started 2001</i>	Tilt/vibration switch	Capacitive, electrolytic, mechanical, metallic ball, potentiometer, solid-state
	Float switch	Alloy, capacitance, conductivity, magnetic dry reed, mechanical, metallic ball, optical, pressure transmitter, sonic/ultrasonic, thermal
	Pressure switch	Mechanical, solid-state
	Temperature switch	Mechanical, solid-state
	Displacement relay	Dry magnetic reed, electromechanical, hybrid (electromechanical & solid-state), silicon controlled rectifier, solid-state
	Wetted reed relay	
	Contact relay	
	Flame sensor	Electronic ignition system
Thermostat	Digital, snap-switch	
MEASURING DEVICES <i>Replacements started 2001</i>	Sphygmomanometer	Aneroid, oscillometrics
	Fever Thermometer	Digital, Liquid-in-glass
	Non-fever Thermometer	Bi-metal, digital, infrared, liquid-in-glass
	Hygrometer/Psychrometer	Digital, spirit-filled
	Barometer	Aneroid, digital
	Manometer	Aneroid, digital, needle/bourdon
	Flow Meter	Ball-actuated, digital
	Pyrometer	Digital, optical
	Hydrometer	Spirit-filled
LIGHTS/LIGHTING <i>Replacements started 2008</i>	Linear fluorescent	Linear LED
	Compact fluorescent	LED, LED downlight
	High intensity discharge	Halogen, LED, mercury-free units
	Backlight units for LCD displays	LED
	Mercury short arc	No known mercury-free alternatives
	Neon	
DENTAL AMALGAM <i>Replacements started 1970s</i>	Dental cements and fillings	Composite, glass ionomer, resin ionomer
PAINTS <i>Replacements started 1991</i>	Interior/exterior paints (phenylmercuric acetate, biocide)	Non-mercury preservative/microbial
PESTICIDES <i>Replacements started 1972</i>	Agricultural applications (organomercurial compounds, biocide)	Non-mercury based pesticides
COSMETICS <i>Replacements started 1974</i>	Skin care products (creams, soaps, lotions)	Non-mercury preservative/microbial

Source: United Nations Environment Programme, unep.org/explore-topics/chemicals-waste/what-we-do/mercury