

Some Issues About Mercury

What happens to your recycled mercury? (e.g. sent to other countries, reused, recovered, etc.)

The recovered mercury is used in new products that still require mercury, like fluorescent light bulbs or dental amalgam fillings. There is now enough recycled mercury in the United States so that product manufacturers do not need to use new mercury from mines ... all mercury mining in the U.S. has stopped. Some of the recycled mercury may also be shipped overseas to foreign product manufacturers. The U.S. government is also studying whether to permanently store liquid mercury if the supply of recycled mercury exceeds manufacturing demand. Demand for mercury is dropping quickly because most mercury-containing products are now replaced with non-mercury alternative products when the mercury-containing products wear out.

How to pick up a reputable recycler?

Ask the recycler if they have a license from the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources to receive, store, and transport mercury-containing products. Ask for the name of the company's contact at the WDNR. Then call the WDNR contact if you want to check whether the recycling company is complying with all applicable regulations.

*This information has been provided by Aidan Reilly, WI-DNR

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