

Set a Shining Example:

Don't Flush Mercury Down the Drain!

Mercury-containing wastes are a fact of life in dental offices.

But washed down the drain or otherwise improperly disposed, they can find their way into San Francisco Bay, impairing its quality and contaminating fish. Eating these fish is especially harmful to pregnant women, children, and developing fetuses. Your local wastewater treatment facilities are working to reduce mercury discharges to the Bay...and you can help:

Bulk mercury Place unwanted waste in an airtight container labeled "Bulk Mercury Waste" and recycle through one of the firms listed on back.

Scrap amalgam Place excess remaining at the end of a procedure in an airtight container labeled "Scrap Amalgam." Recover this waste as scrap metal or recycle as above.

Amalgam waste collected in traps Empty reusable traps into an airtight wide-mouthed container labeled "Amalgam for Recycling." Place disposable traps directly into the container. Other waste amalgam, such as extracted teeth with amalgam restorations, should also be placed in this container. Recycle or dispose of as hazardous waste.



More Tips

1 ▶ **Never rinse traps in the sink.** The trapped mercury-containing amalgam will go directly to the sewer and wastewater treatment plant, which isn't equipped to handle it.

Don't put mercury-containing waste in medical waste containers. Incineration and solid-waste disposal can release mercury directly into the environment.

3 ▶ **Empty used amalgam capsules do not require special handling.** You may put them in the trash.

4 ▼

Don't place other materials in your mercury waste or recycling containers. The added volume will cost more and may make disposal or recycling more difficult.

5 ▶

Don't mix waste streams without checking with your waste hauler first. Mixing may limit recycling and disposal options and result in higher costs.

Talk to your waste hauler about specific handling requirements for each mercury-containing waste stream.

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Additional tips & recyclers' addresses on back



