






Mercury in Household Items

Mercury is a toxic substance. Due to its potential to harm human health and pollute the environment, it has been phased out of many common consumer goods that once contained mercury. However, older devices and appliances may contain mercury, and these items require special handling for safe disposal of mercury.

The following list* of household items may contain mercury. If you find mercury in your home, follow the instructions for proper disposal.

Never dispose of mercury down the drain or in the trash.

Household Item	Identification	Proper Disposal
Non-digital thermometers with silver liquid inside		Dane County Clean Sweep madsewer.org/cleansweep
Non-digital thermostats with silver liquid inside		Dane County Clean Sweep madsewer.org/cleansweep
Chest freezers manufactured prior to 2000		Remove mercury component and take to Dane County Clean Sweep ; follow local large appliance disposal guidelines for the rest of the freezer.
Fluorescent light bulbs including compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFLs)		Recycle at drop-off centers and businesses in Dane County. madsewer.org/lightbulbs
Gas flow regulators in homes built prior to 1970	Regulator is positioned horizontally. Vertically-positioned regulators do not contain mercury. 	Contact your local gas company for removal.

* This list is not exhaustive of all mercury-containing items. Photos used are for reference and mercury-containing objects may differ in appearance. You can find additional information and resources at madsewer.org/mercury. Some of the featured item information, disposal instructions and photos were obtained from the Northeast Waste Management Officials' Association website at newmoa.org/mercury-legacy-products-appliance-household-products/.

List continues on the next page...



Mercury in Household Items

Household Item	Identification	Proper Disposal
<p>Gas furnaces manufactured prior to 1970</p> <p>NOTE: mercury-containing replacement parts are still available on the market</p>	<p>Assume that pre-2000 gas furnaces have a mercury-containing flame sensor attached to the shutoff valve.</p> <p>Ask if your technician is experienced in removing mercury components.</p> 	<p>A qualified HVAC technician should disconnect the appliance and then remove the mercury flame sensor for proper disposal.</p>
<p>Gas oven flame sensors and relays in ovens manufactured prior to 2001</p>		<p>A qualified appliance service technician should remove the mercury-containing component before the item is disposed of according to local large appliance disposal guidance.</p>
<p>Silent light switches manufactured prior to 1991</p>	 <p>These switches do not make a “click” sound when the switch is flipped.</p>	<p>Carefully remove the entire switch from the wall to avoid breaking the mercury-containing component. Take the switch to Dane County Clean Sweep for disposal.</p>
<p>Sump pump float switches</p>	<p>The mercury is inside the float bulb. If there’s a wire connected to the float, it likely contains mercury.</p> 	<p>Contact your local gas company for removal.</p>
<p>Televisions Old analog or flat panel televisions and monitors (LCD, DLP, LCOS and plasma)</p>		<p>Dane County Clean Sweep madsewer.org/cleansweep</p>
<p>Washing machines manufactured prior to 1972</p>		<p>Follow large appliance disposal instructions for the local municipality.</p>

