

Recommended Practices Handling Amalgam & Mercury Wastes

Amalgam	Stop!
<p>Contact Amalgam has been in contact with the patient and includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> teeth containing amalgam from patient/extractions, scrap amalgam from patient/old fillings, chair-side traps, screens, and amalgam sludge from vacuum pump filters and other amalgam capture device. <p>Recommended Practices for Contact Amalgam:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Always use personal protective equipment (gloves) when handling contact amalgam. Render teeth containing amalgam noninfectious by chemical means. Store amalgam wastes in separate airtight containers labeled "extracted teeth". Clean or replace screens, traps, or filters on a regular basis. Clean screens, traps, and filters before cleaning vacuum lines. Recycle all waste amalgam. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Don't place any kind of amalgam waste in your biohazard (red) bag, the trash or sharps container. Don't rinse traps, filters, or screens over or down the drain or into a waste basket. Don't disinfect teeth or any item containing amalgam with any method that uses heat. Don't use house-hold bleach or other oxidizing cleaner on vacuum lines. Don't decant liquid in which amalgam has been stored down the drain. Don't rinse tools used to place or carve amalgams over the drain.
<p>Non-Contact Amalgam has not been in contact with the patient and includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> broken or unusable amalgam capsules, excess amalgam, and empty amalgam capsules from restorative treatment. <p>Recommended Practices for Non-Contact Amalgam:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Store amalgam wastes in separate airtight containers labeled "extracted teeth," "scrap amalgam," "traps," etc. Recycle all waste amalgam. 	

Elemental Mercury	Stop!
<p>Mercury that results from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • spills of bulk mercury, • broken thermometers, and • blood pressure units. <p>Recommended Practices for Elemental Mercury:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Train staff in spill cleanup procedures. • Always wear nitrile gloves to clean up a spill. • Clean up visible mercury with a spill kit. • Place contaminated items in a sealable container labeled "bulk mercury waste" and send to an authorized recycling facility. • Recycle unused bulk mercury through an amalgam recycler. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't clean mercury spills with a vacuum cleaner.
Fluorescent Light Bulbs	Stop!
<p>Fluorescent Bulbs are comprised of phosphor powder which contains mercury.</p> <p>Recommended Practices for Fluorescent Bulbs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recycle fluorescent light bulbs through a mercury recycler. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't break fluorescent bulbs or discard them in the trash.

*Developed by the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority
with assistance from the Massachusetts Dental Society
and support from the Massachusetts Executive Office of Environmental Affairs
and the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection*