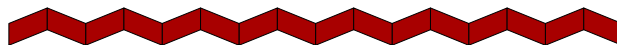




# MERCURY SPILL CLEAN-UP PROCEDURES



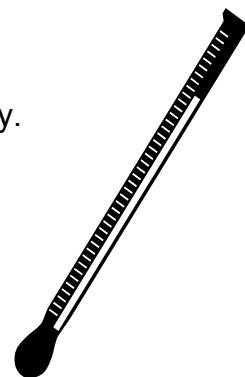
## Safety & Security Fact Sheet

The mercury in a fever thermometer is not a hazard unless the thermometer is broken. Then the primary hazard is broken glass, not the mercury. Procedures for the clean up include precautions against being cut. Since mercury may be absorbed through prolonged contact with the skin, the use of gloves, tongs, or other instruments is imperative.

When mercury is spilled, the potential for exposure is mainly through the inhalation route. The vapor pressure of mercury is very low, so mercury is not readily released into the air in significant concentrations. Every effort should be made to minimize the dispersion of the mercury.

### WHEN MERCURY IS SPILLED:

- ✓ Initiate cleanup immediately, provide warning to others without creating panic.
- ✓ Maximize ventilation, open windows and doors, and use electric fans.
- ✓ Avoid walking in the spill area, cover shoes with plastic bags, if necessary.
- ✓ Do not use a broom, brush, mop, or ordinary vacuum cleaner to pick up mercury.
- ✓ Gently push the mercury beads together using stiff paper or single-layered cardboard.
- ✓ Draw the mercury into a medicine dropper, or push it onto stiff paper.
- ✓ Carefully transfer the collected mercury to a seamless plastic bottle, avoid a secondary spill.
- ✓ Label bottle and either give it to the science chairperson, or call the Office of Safty and Security for pick up.
- ✓ For difficult cleanups, notify the Office of Safety and Security.



If you need assistance, call the safety section at 571-423-2010.