

Village of Saugerties Sewer Department

Mercury in Your Home: Sources & Safe Disposal

Protecting Our Waterways from Mercury Pollution

Mercury is a toxic metal that can harm human health and the environment. When mercury enters our wastewater system, it can contaminate water sources and wildlife. Proper disposal is essential to keeping our community safe.

Common Household Sources of Mercury

- **Thermometers** – Older fever thermometers contain mercury. Look for non-mercury digital alternatives.
- **Fluorescent Light Bulbs (CFLs)** – These energy-efficient bulbs contain a small amount of mercury.
- **Thermostats** – Older models may have mercury switches.
- **Button Cell Batteries** – Found in watches, hearing aids, and calculators.
- **Switches & Relays** – Present in some appliances and older electrical equipment.
- **Antique Items** – Some antiques, including barometers and mirrors, may contain mercury.
- **Hobby & Craft Materials** – Certain paints and adhesives in older supplies may have mercury.

How to Dispose of Mercury-Containing Items

Do NOT throw mercury items in the trash or pour them down the drain!

Instead, follow these safe disposal steps:

1. **Locate a Disposal Site** – Bring mercury-containing items to a designated drop-off location. [Ulster County Resource Recovery](#)
2. **Use Household Hazardous Waste Programs** – Many communities offer hazardous waste collection events. [Ulster County Resource Recovery](#)
3. **Recycle CFL Bulbs** – Many hardware stores accept CFLs for recycling.
4. **Contact the Sewer Department for Guidance** – If unsure, reach out for safe disposal options. 845-246-8958

What to Do If You Have a Mercury Spill

If a thermometer or other small mercury-containing item breaks:

- **Do NOT vacuum or sweep** – This can spread mercury vapor.
- **Ventilate the Area** – Open windows and leave the room.
- **Use Proper Cleanup Techniques** – Carefully collect mercury beads using stiff paper or tape. Store in a sealed container.

- **Seek Disposal Assistance** – Contact local authorities for cleanup guidance. Large Spills:

If the spill is large (more than a broken thermometer's worth), call the National Response Center at 1-800-424-8802.

Local Authorities:

Contact the Ulster County Department of Health at (845) 340–3150

- **Be a part of the Solution!**

By properly disposing of mercury-containing items, you help protect the Village of Saugerties' water quality and keep our community safe. For more information, visit <https://www.health.ny.gov/environmental/chemicals/mercury/brochures/disposal.htm>

<https://dec.ny.gov/environmental-protection/mercury>

or contact the Sewer Department at 845-246-8958.