

HALIFAX FIRE DEPARTMENT	MERCURY SPILL RESPONSE PROCEDURES
SOG 24	
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23.01 PURPOSE

The purpose of this procedure is to establish and document guidelines to be used by the Halifax Fire Department when a mercury release occurs at a commercial facility or in a residential setting.

23.02 PROCEDURES

Upon the arrival of Fire Department units, Command shall:

- Contact the on-site responsible party;
- Determine the amount of mercury released;
- Determine the mercury source and, if possible, secure the source to prevent further mercury loss.
- Determine the size of affected area

SMALL MERCURY RELEASE (Home thermometer or fluorescent light bulb)

Command is also responsible to:

- EVACUATE the affected area;
- ISOLATE the affected area utilizing hazard line tape;
- DENY ENTRY.
- REQUEST, through Dispatch, that the Fire Chief and Department Hazardous Materials Technician(s) be contacted to respond, if available.
- CONSIDER activating a Tier 1 Hazmat Response, for metering purposes.

Utilizing SCBA while in immediate spill area, use the mercury spill kit with the following procedures.

1. Delineate the area that may have mercury droplets with string, tape or other materials. DO NOT TOUCH MERCURY DROPLETS
2. Move all objects away from spill
3. If Possible, Open windows in room to ventilate
4. Remove all Jewelry from your hands and wrists, since mercury bonds with most metals. Put on disposable gloves. DO NOT TOUCH MERCURY WITH YOUR BARE HANDS!
5. Using Index cards, or cardboard; push mercury droplets you can see together. Lift the mercury beads into a glass jar or rigid plastic container.

DO NOT USE A HOUSEHOLD VACUUM! This will exacerbate the problem and spread mercury vapors further.

6. If there are small beads that you cannot get up with the stiff paper you can pick them up with sticky tape.
7. Wipe a hard surface with a damp paper towel. Remove carpet or porous material and isolate in an airtight container.
8. Place all used materials used to clean up in a glass jar, plastic container or sealable plastic bag.
9. If you are using a sealable plastic bag, try to find a glass jar with screw on metal lid or rigid plastic container with tight fitting lid as soon as possible to contain the plastic bag and contents. Mercury vapors will pass through a sealed plastic bag or loosely closed container and will contaminate the air of the room the container is in.
10. Label your Container with "HAZARDOUS WASTE-MERCURY/CONTAMINATED SPILL CLEANUP MATERIALS" with the Date and Time
11. Dispose of the container following the direction of MassDEP

LARGE MERCURY RELEASE (Greater than two tablespoons)

- EVACUATE the affected area;
- Request, through Dispatch, that the Fire Chief and Department Hazardous Materials Technician(s) be contacted to respond, if available.
- ACTIVATE a Tier 1 State Hazmat Response.
- If the spill contains one pound (Two Tablespoons) of mercury or more, you must report the spill to the Mass. Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) within two hours from the time you became aware of the release.
- Utilizing SCBA, and disposable gloves. Mark the affected area with tape or string and maintain an isolation perimeter, take care to avoid stepping in mercury.
- Ventilate the area if possible.
- Stand by on scene and follow the direction of the Hazmat Response Team upon their arrival
- Decontaminate any PPE or clothing that may have come in contact with the mercury before returning to the fire station. (Bottom of boots)