



## **Fluorescent Bulbs and other Mercury-Containing Products**

### **Fluorescent lamps save energy:**

Compared to standard incandescent lamps, fluorescent lamps can reduce energy consumption by 50% and lighting costs by 30-38%. Fluorescent lamps last, on average, ten times longer than conventional lamps.

### **Fluorescent lamps contain mercury and must be disposed of correctly:**

Improper lamp *disposal* is a human health and water pollution problem, because lamps broken in landfills or at home release mercury - a potent neurotoxin. Dispose of used fluorescent lamps at your local household hazardous waste collection centers. These centers send fluorescent lamps to specialized recycling facilities where the mercury in them is recovered for reuse, rather than allowing it to escape into the environment and pollute our water.

### **Buy low-mercury fluorescent lamps:**

Major lighting manufacturers now produce lamps with approximately 80 percent less mercury than standard fluorescent lamps:

Philips "Alto"

GE "Ecolux"

Sylvania "Ecologic"

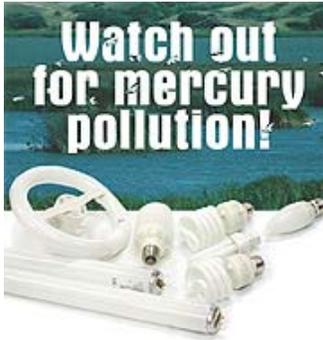
However, since none of these lamps is completely mercury-free, they should also be disposed of at local household hazardous waste collection centers.

### **Recycle mercury-containing thermometers, thermostats and batteries:**

Because mercury is a good conductor of electricity and is the only metal that is liquid at room temperature, it is used in household products like thermometers, thermostats, batteries, and pre-1997 light-up sneakers. All of these items are accepted at local household hazardous waste collection centers and should be turned in there.

### **What should you do if a product that contains mercury breaks in your home?**

If you spill mercury in your home, turn off the heating or air conditioning and ventilate the room to the outdoors. Avoid touching the mercury with your bare hands and do not vacuum the spill. Using a medicine dropper, collect the mercury and place the mercury and the dropper in an airtight container. Take the mercury to your local household hazardous waste facility or collection event.



**Watch out for mercury pollution!**

**Mercury released into the environment is transported by air, rain, snow or runoff and deposited in our creeks and Bay.**

**Each year in the Bay Area, broken and landfilled fluorescent lamps release enough mercury vapors to contaminate a water body almost as big as Lake Tahoe.**

**Mercury harms aquatic life too. Information from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service indicates that mercury in sediment may cause increased mortality and deformities of rainbow trout embryos.**

**You can get exposed to mercury by consuming mercury-contaminated fish. Grocery retailers have begun displaying signs near fish counters cautioning consumers about the dangers of mercury in fish.**

**Due to the San Francisco Bay mercury contamination, it is recommended that adults eat no more than two servings of fish from the Bay per month.**