

NEWS RELEASE

Proper Disposal of Common Mercury-bearing Devices

Did you know that some common household items contain Mercury? Fluorescent tubes, compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFL's), ultra-violet lamps used in UV disinfection systems, old thermometers, thermostats, some types of batteries and electrical switches such as those that seamlessly activate lights when you open the trunk of your car or the door of your chest freezer may each contain mercury in varying amounts.

These items pose no threat to human health when they are intact; the mercury is tightly sealed in glass, stainless steel, or hard plastic (never attempt to remove mercury from an item in your home!). But disposing of mercury-bearing products through landfilling, scrapping or incineration can release the mercury into the environment, generating measurable increases in the incidence of mercury in our air, water and soil. Mercury (Hg) is a potent toxin which in very small amounts can pollute air, water and soil and poison wildlife. Human exposure to this substance can lead to developmental and reproductive problems, neurological damage, and even death. According to the Ministry of Environment one gram of mercury – roughly the amount contained in the average mercury-bearing thermometer or electrical switch – is enough to contaminate an 8-hectare (20 acre) lake.

Fortunately, you can safely dispose of many of these mercury-bearing items at one of the many Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) collection depots.

We have enquired on your behalf and have found that the local HHW depots in Quinte, Northumberland, Peterborough and City of Kawartha Lakes will accept “Ultra-Violet Lamps” for proper disposal by their highly trained teams.

For more information please contact your local city office or go on line as follows:

- 1. city.peterborough.on.ca**
- 2. city.kawarthalakes.on.ca**
- 3. northumberlandcounty.ca/departments/publicworks/hazardouswaste.asp**
- 4. city.belleville.on.ca**