

The Facts

On Elemental Mercury

Elemental Mercury

Mercury is a heavy, odorless silver-color liquid metal at room temperature.



What to do during any elemental mercury spill (even from a laboratory mercury thermometer)

- Evacuate the area
- Secure the area to prevent entry
- Mark the area with **Do Not Enter**
- Notify Research Safety immediately at **656-0341** for cleanup assistance



Mercury Exchange Program

The Office of Research Safety (ORS) proudly presents the Mercury Exchange Program. This is a great program that enables laboratories to exchange their intact mercury thermometers, manometers, and other mercury-containing devices for non-mercury devices at no cost.

The key factors of the Mercury Exchange Program are to:

- Reduce the health and environmental risks of mercury pollution.
- Prevent laboratory closures due to the clean-up of mercury spills from broken mercury thermometers, manometers and other mercury-containing equipment.
- Exchange mercury devices with non-mercury devices for **FREE**

To participate, please contact the Hazardous Materials Manager at 864-633-6357 or juneb@clermson.edu or contact ORS at 864-656-0341.

What **NEVER** to Do After a Mercury Spill



- Never use a vacuum cleaner to clean up mercury.
- Never use a broom to clean up mercury.
- Never pour mercury down a drain.
- Never walk around if your shoes might be contaminated with mercury. Contaminated clothing can also spread mercury.
- Never treat or cover with other products such as sulfur, zinc powder or activated charcoal

Elemental Mercury waste is very expensive to dispose of. Adding other materials such as sulfur, activated charcoal, zinc powder can result in a waste stream that presents greater difficulty from a treatment/disposal aspect.

Always consult with [Research Safety](#) prior to any attempts to clean up an elemental mercury spill. Improper clean up procedures can result in personal exposures and unintentional spreading of the mercury beads. This could result in an extended amount of time the area needs to be restricted.

The Office of Research Safety strives to promote a culture of safety, integrity, and quality within the University research community. Along with the Office of Research Compliance, we work to facilitate University research, teaching and public service programs by providing oversight and coordination of research.

Clemson University is achieving its goal of becoming a mercury free campus.