

MERCURY

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Hg

What is Mercury?

It is a naturally occurring metal that has multiple forms. The most common form is methylmercury, which is mainly produced by microscopic organisms in the water and soil.

Chemical Information

- Heavy, shiny, silver-white, odorless liquid.
- Nonflammable, but releases highly toxic vapor, especially if heated. This vapor is dangerous when inhaled.

Stability & Reactivity

- If heated mercury becomes a colorless, odorless gas.
- Mercury is less reactive than other metals (i.e. cadmium and zinc).

Handling & Storage

Keep metallic mercury in a safe and secured area such as a closed container in a locked storage room that is well-ventilated.

Mercury Spill Clean-up Guide

WHAT TO DO:

- Have everyone else leave the area; don't let anyone walk through the mercury on their way out.
- Open all windows and doors to the outside.
- Turn down the temperature.
- Shut all doors to other parts of the house and leave the area.
- Call the local fire department followed by the local health department after leaving the area.

DO NOT:

- Use a vacuum cleaner, this will aerosolize the mercury and increase exposure.
- Use a broom, this will break the mercury in smaller droplets and increase spread.
- Pour mercury down a drain, can cause pollution of the sewage treatment plant or septic tank.
- Walk around in case your shoes have become contaminated. Contaminated clothing can spread mercury.



For assistance managing exposures to hazardous substances, please call North Carolina Poison Control at 1-800-222-1222.

In case of a life threatening emergency, dial 9-1-1 immediately.



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