





## REPLACE MERCURY THERMOMETERS BEFORE THEY BREAK

Liquid Mercury is Highly Toxic. Mercury spilled from broken thermometers presents a hazard for faculty, staff, and students in laboratory areas. Mercury additionally presents a hazard to the local environment should mercury from thermometers broken in lab sinks find its way to the sanitary sewer plant. Broken mercury thermometers create hazardous waste that is costly to clean up and expensive to properly dispose. Alternative non-mercury thermometers are readily available thus it is easy to replace mercury thermometers with high-accuracy alternatives that reduce risk in the laboratory and much more protective of the environment beyond the lab.

Mercury Thermometers 	Non-Mercury Thermometers 
Mercury thermometers will eventually break generating hazardous waste from the spill clean up of this very toxic heavy metal.	Non-mercury thermometers reduce clean-up costs from breaks and spills.
Mercury is volatile at room temperature with vapors that are colorless, odorless, tasteless, and toxic. Each time a thermometer breaks, there is a potential for lab and clean-up personnel to be exposed to mercury.	Non-mercury thermometers are less toxic and negate the risk of exposure to hazardous mercury vapors.
Mercury thermometers and the all contaminated clean-up materials generated by a spill are very expensive to legally dispose.	Most non-mercury thermometers are certified to meet laboratory accuracy requirements by the National Institute of Standard and Technology or the National Committee for Clinical Laboratory Standards.
0.5 grams of Mercury from one broken thermometer can detectably pollute several million gallons of Olentangy-Scioto Rivers watershed.	Non-mercury thermometers are available and accurate for temperature ranges from -100 to +260 ° C (-148 to 500 ° F)
Please consider replacing your mercury thermometer with a mercury-free alternative thermometer!	Non-mercury thermometers can be used in incubators, water baths, or other applications where mercury thermometers have been traditionally used.

You can purchase non-mercury thermometers at your local campus store or directly through a vendor. Please dispose of your mercury thermometers through Environmental Health and Safety as you would other hazardous waste.

Contact EHS 292-1284 - <http://www.ehs.ohio-state.edu/>

[MSDS for Mercury in Glass Thermometer](#)

[Mercury Thermometer Replacement Alternatives Spreadsheet-Stanford Univ.](#)

[Mercury Thermometer Replacement-Stanford Univ.](#)

[Health Care Without Harm- A Resource for Pollution Prevention in Health Care & Research](#)