

**Are large quantities
of mercury stored
on the shelf in your
chemical storage
room?**

**Is your chemical
storage room
locked?**

**Do you have a
mercury cleanup
kit in your
science area?**

**Where can I get more
information?**

Illinois Department of Public Health
Division of Environmental Health
525 W. Jefferson St.
Springfield, IL 62761
217-782-5830
TTY (hearing impaired use only)
800-547-0466
www.idph.state.il.us

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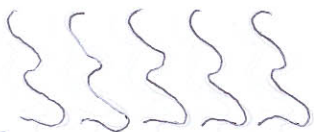
**Mercury is
cool, but
you don't
need much
at school!**

**Illinois Department
of Public Health**

George H. Ryan
Governor

John R. Lumpkin, M.D., M.P.H.
Director

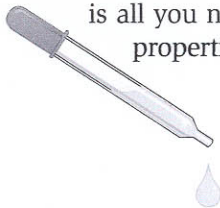
Mercury is a silver-colored, shiny, liquid metal. It can harm students and staff if spilled in your school.



- ✓ Liquid mercury evaporates into the air. Breathing this mercury vapor is the most common way people are exposed.
- ✓ Mercury exposure can cause burning in the mouth, swollen gums, sore throat, chills, headache, fever, chest pain and difficulty breathing.
- ✓ If someone is exposed to mercury for a long time, loss of appetite, sleeplessness, forgetfulness, tremors, shyness, urine problems, weak eyesight and defective hearing can occur.

- ✓ Large mercury spills at schools can require evacuation of the area. In addition, facilities cannot be used until a cleanup occurs. Remediation of large mercury spills in schools can cost hundreds of thousands of dollars.

- ✓ Large quantities of mercury are not necessary for educational purposes. A small amount of mercury in a small plastic vial is all you need to show the properties of mercury.



- ✓ Your chemical storage room should always be kept locked to prevent unauthorized access.

- ✓ Never vacuum a mercury spill. This puts mercury vapor into the air and contaminates the vacuum cleaner.



- ✓ Small spills, like from a thermometer, can be cleaned up with sticky tape. Use a piece of paper to bring the spilled balls of mercury together. Then, pick the mercury up with the tape and throw it away outdoors in the trash.
- ✓ Mercury cleanup kits are available from most school chemical suppliers and are useful for cleaning up small spills.