



RUSSIAN RIVER WATERSHED ASSOCIATION MERCURY POLLUTION PREVENTION PROGRAM BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

AMALGAM WASTE



Follow recycler or hauler instructions, if any, for disinfection of waste and separation of contact and non-contact amalgam.



Train staff who handle or may handle mercury-containing material in its proper use and disposal.



Separate excess contact dental amalgam that is retrieved during placement with gauze and place in an appropriate container.



Consider the use of amalgam removal technologies, such as sedimentation systems or amalgam separators, if you practice in an area where mercury in wastewater discharges is a serious concern.



Use chairside traps to capture dental amalgam.



Change, or clean, chairside traps frequently. Flush the vacuum system before changing the chairside trap.

Publicly Owned Treatment Works (POTW) may choose to make some BMPs mandatory



Change vacuum pump filters and screens at least monthly or as directed by the manufacturer.



Check the p-trap under your sink for the presence of any amalgam-containing waste.



Eliminate all use of bulk elemental mercury and use only precapsulated dental amalgam for amalgam restorations.



Limit the amount of amalgam triturated to the closest amount needed for the restoration.



Keep a variety of amalgam capsule sizes on hand to ensure that almost all triturated amalgam is used.



PRACTICES TO AVOID:

- Never use bulk mercury for amalgams.
- Never pour bulk elemental mercury waste in the garbage, red bag or down the drain.
- Never use bleach-containing cleansers to clean vacuum lines.
- Never place amalgam waste of any kind (including extracted teeth w/amalgams) in the biohazard (red) bag, the trash, or the sharps container.
- Never rinse traps, filters, or screens over or down the drain, or into a waste basket.
- Never disinfect teeth or any item containing amalgam with any method that uses heat.
- Never decant liquid in which amalgam has been stored down the drain.
- Never rinse tools used to place or carve amalgam over the drain.
- Never clean spills of elemental mercury with a vacuum cleaner.



MANDATORY PER CALIFORNIA CODE OF REGULATIONS TITLE 22:

- Do not rinse amalgam-containing traps, filters, or containers in the sink.
- Do not place amalgam, elemental mercury, broken or unusable amalgam capsules, extracted teeth with amalgam, or amalgam containing traps and filters with medical waste or regular solid waste.
- Recycle, or manage as hazardous waste, amalgam, elemental mercury, broken or unusable amalgam capsules, extracted teeth with amalgam, amalgam-containing waste from traps and filters.
- Keep amalgam waste in an air-tight container.

For amalgam-related questions, contact the California Dental Association at 800-736-7071 ext. 4993.
Information based on materials developed by the California Dental Association and City of Palo Alto.



RUSSIAN RIVER WATERSHED ASSOCIATION

www.rrwatershed.org • (707) 833-2553 • 300 Seminary Avenue • Ukiah • California • 95482

