

WHY RECYCLE?

Compact fluorescent lights (CFLs) are an excellent environmental choice because they are highly energy efficient. Unfortunately, in order to function properly, CFLs contain a small amount of **mercury** – a toxic pollutant that persists in the environment and harms human health.

Mercury causes damage to the human brain, spinal cord, kidneys and liver. It is especially dangerous during fetal development and to small children. Any products containing mercury should be recycled to keep this dangerous element out of our environment.

Only when a CFL is broken or placed in a landfill is mercury is released into the environment.

The amount of mercury contained in one CFL is about 4 to 5 mg. Technologies are being developed to continue to reduce this amount of mercury.

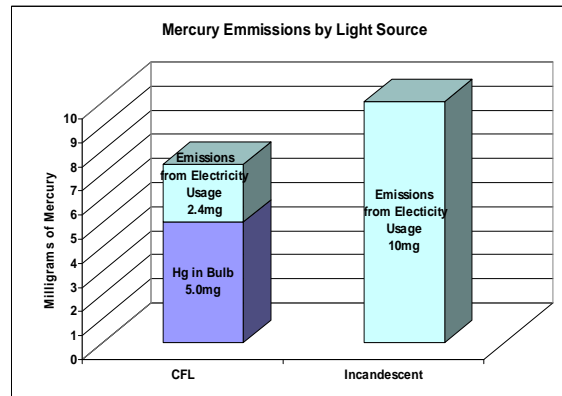
HOW TO RECYCLE

Follow these steps to get your CFLs recycled:

1. Place bulb in a sealable bag.
2. Place this bag/bulb into a rigid container, such as a plastic coffee can.
3. When you have several bulbs in the container, take them to a recycling center listed in this brochure.

CFLS: A BETTER CHOICE?

Although incandescent bulbs do not contain mercury inside them, their use still contributes to mercury emissions through electricity usage. One CFL can last an average of 10,000 hours. You would need five incandescent bulbs to last that long. The following graph shows the difference in mercury released to the environment by each type of bulb.



Even though CFLs contain mercury inside of them, the amount of mercury released into the environment is greater for an incandescent bulb.

WHAT IF YOU BREAK A BULB?

There are some important steps to follow to reduce exposure to the mercury vapors in the air.

1. Have all children, pregnant women and pets leave the room.

2. Open all windows and doors to the room and shut off the furnace or air conditioning.
3. Leave the room for 15 minutes to allow the mercury vapors to mix with fresh air.

On Hard Surfaces

1. **Do not use a vacuum!** This will only create more mercury vapors. Instead, wearing disposable gloves, use a piece of cardboard to clean up the broken glass and remnants.
2. Use sticky tape to pick up the small pieces of glass and wipe the area with a wet paper towel.
3. Place the broken glass, cardboard, sticky tape and paper towels into a sealable bag and then into the trash.

On Carpeted Surfaces

1. Wearing disposable gloves, pick up as much material as you can by hand and then with sticky tape. Place everything into a sealable bag.
2. If you must use a vacuum, vacuum only the area where the break occurred. When done, take the bag from the vacuum and place in an empty trash bag.
3. Take the sealable bag and the trash bag with the vacuum bag and place in the trash and take the trash to an outdoor garbage can.