

# **Homeowners included in mercury disposal ban**

Effective January 1, 2008, RSA 149-M:58 bans the disposal of all products containing intentionally-added mercury in landfills, transfer stations and incinerators, regardless of the amount of mercury they contain. Homeowners and businesses alike are affected by the ban on such items as thermometers, thermostats, electrical switches, mercury button cell batteries and fluorescent light bulbs, including compact fluorescent bulbs. Because mercury is a highly toxic chemical that does not break down, and accumulates in our bodies over time, it should not be discharged to the environment.

There are several legal disposal options for homeowners. Homeowners can bring spent bulbs and mercury-containing products to their town facility, if the town accepts them, or to a household hazardous waste collection event. Currently, some 60 municipal programs accept fluorescent lamps and of those, about 29 also accept mercury-containing products. Homeowners and small businesses may take up to 6 fluorescent lamps to participating TrueValue and Ace hardware stores where the lamps will be accepted and recycled at no cost to the consumer.

Additionally, mercury restrictions in RSA 149-M:51 prohibit the sale of many mercury-added products in the state, including thermometers and other measuring devices, switches, relays and thermostats. The sales prohibition on measuring devices will take effect on January 1, 2008. Switches, relays and thermostats sales will be restricted as of July 1, 2008.

For a more comprehensive list of common mercury-added products and recycling options, visit the N.H. Pollution Prevention Program website at [www.des.nh.gov/nhppp/Mercury/Hgproducts.asp](http://www.des.nh.gov/nhppp/Mercury/Hgproducts.asp).

For a list of household hazardous waste collection events and options for proper product recycling, go to [www.des.nh.gov/HHW/](http://www.des.nh.gov/HHW/).

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