

## Mercury/Amalgam Waste Handling Procedures for Dentists

Waste Type	Source	Management Options	Restrictions
<b>Extracted Teeth Containing Amalgam</b>	Dental extractions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Place in the contact amalgam container</li> <li>2. Recycle through an amalgam recycler</li> </ol>	<p><b>DO NOT:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Place in the biohazard bag</li> <li>• Place in the trash</li> <li>• Place in the sharps container</li> </ul>
<b>Elemental Mercury</b>	Bulk mercury containers, spills and spill cleanup containers	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Always wear nitrile gloves when cleaning up a spill</li> <li>2. Train staff in spill clean-up procedures</li> <li>3. Recycle unused bulk mercury through a recycler</li> <li>4. React small amounts of elemental mercury with amalgam alloy – recycle as scrap metal</li> </ol>	<p><b>DO NOT:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rinse down the drain</li> <li>• Place in the trash</li> <li>• Place in the biohazard bag</li> <li>• Place in the sharps container</li> <li>• Clean up spills with a vacuum cleaner</li> </ul>
<b>Empty Amalgam Capsules</b>	Restorative treatment	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Dispose of in the trash</li> </ol>	
<b>Broken or Unusable Amalgam Capsules</b>	Restorative treatment	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Collect and store contents with scrap amalgam for recycling</li> </ol>	<p><b>DO NOT:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Place in the trash</li> <li>• Place in the biohazard bag</li> <li>• Place in the sharps container</li> </ul>
<b>Scrap Amalgam</b>	Traps, screens, excess mix, vacuum pump filters	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Store in labeled containers</li> <li>2. Send to a recycler</li> <li>3. Recycle heavily-contaminated traps</li> <li>4. Recycle vacuum pump filters</li> </ol>	<p><b>DO NOT:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Place in biohazard bag</li> <li>• Rinse down the drain</li> <li>• Place in the sharps container</li> <li>• Place in the trash</li> <li>• Disinfect with any method that uses heat</li> </ul>

Thanks to the National Wildlife Federation for permission to reproduce these charts from their booklet “The Environmentally Responsible Dental Office.”