

# Mercury Thermometer Exchange

In effort to reduce the amount of mercury in households and in the garbage, Prairieland Compost Facility is promoting a mercury fever thermometer exchange program at any Household Hazardous Waste Collection in Martin or Faribault County or at the Prairieland Solid Waste Coordinator's Office, Room 102 Courthouse, Fairmont, Minnesota. Bring your mercury fever thermometer to any of these sites receive a digital thermometer for free. The thermometers will be given out until they are gone; we limit two digital thermometers per household.

**Digital Thermometer**



**Mercury Thermometer**



## **Facts about Mercury:**

- Mercury is a nerve toxin that is especially dangerous when inhaled.
- Mercury symptoms in children have included apathy, irritability, hypersensitivity, weight loss, sweating, light sensitivity and eczema.
- Mercury bio-accumulates in our environment, which means it builds up in the tissues of humans and animals. This is when ingesting mercury contaminated fish can lead to poisoning.
- Mercury thermometers are made of glass, the size of a straw, with a silvery-white liquid inside.
- Placing Mercury in your garbage can contaminate the Prairieland Compost.

Having a mercury fever thermometer in your home can be a potential risk to the health of your family and community. If mercury spills from a thermometer and is not cleaned up properly, it evaporates and could reach dangerous levels in indoor air. Even the smallest amount of mercury needs to be treated as a serious issue, especially when children and pets reside in the household.

## **Guidelines:**

- Transport thermometer in rigid container to avoid breakage

- Limit two digital thermometers per household. Participants can bring in additional mercury thermometers.
- Limited quantities available, while supplies last

Spilled mercury in your home? Refer to the [MPCA publication](#) for what to do next.

Publication web address: <http://www.pca.state.mn.us/publications/w-hhw2-03.pdf>

For more information, call the Prairieland Solid Waste Coordinator, (507) 238-3115 or toll free (888) 783-3110.