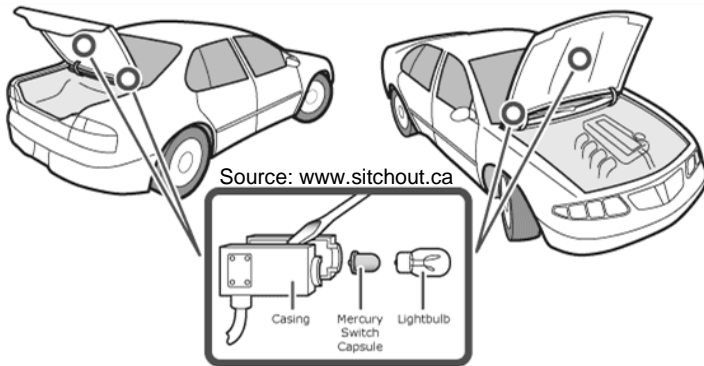




Vehicle Mercury Switch Recovery Program

Division of Waste and Hazardous Substances, Compliance and Permitting Section

Metal from vehicles is one of the most common recycled goods in the United States. Scrapped vehicles are typically stripped, crushed, shredded and then smelted to make new steel products. However, if done improperly this practice can cause unintended pollution. Prior to 2003, it was common for vehicle manufacturers to use mercury switches for anti-lock braking systems and for lighting in hoods and trunks.



Mercury switches can be a bullet shaped piece of metal or a glass capsule at the end of the light socket.



If mercury switches aren't removed prior to recycling, toxic mercury vapor can be released into the air and workers can become exposed through inhalation. Once released, mercury vapors settle and contaminate our air, waterways, and land, and threatens human health. Depending on the amount of exposure a person has to mercury, the health effects can include sensation losses, tremors, convulsions, kidney damage and even death.

What is the National Vehicle Mercury Switch Recovery Program (NVMSRP)?

The NVMSRP is an agreement between the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), American Iron and Steel Institute, Automotive Recycler's Association and other institutions to facilitate the responsible removal and recovery of mercury switches from scrap vehicles before they are shredded for recycling. This agreement is in effect until December 31, 2021, and participation is available for all interested parties, with focus on recovery switches from vehicle salvage/scrap yards.

Why Should My Business Participate in This Program?

Although automakers have phased out the use of mercury switches, vehicles manufactured before 2003 may have mercury switches that must be responsibly managed. To ensure proper removal and management of mercury switches, many states enacted legislation requiring the switches to be removed from vehicles prior to recycling. Thus placing the cost of properly managing mercury switches on the generator. That being said, any business (including one bound by legislative requirements) is allowed to participate in the NVMSR program. By participating in the NVMSR program, a business can reduce mercury releases, and in turn, protect human health by reducing the negative environment effects associated with mercury, while incurring no cost for shipping or recycling the collected mercury switches.

What Mercury Containing Items Are Accepted?

NVMSRP only accepts vehicle mercury switches. Please do not place other mercury containing devices (e.g., hot water heater controls, thermometers) in collection containers. Other mercury containing devices must be managed as universal waste or hazardous waste. Please refer to the [Mercury Waste Fact Sheet](#) for more information.

How Do I Participate?

To enroll in the NVMSRP, submit an online application at elvsolutions.org or call End Life of Vehicle Solutions at 877-225-ELVS. Once enrolled, you will receive a bucket with pre-paid postage for return. To receive a replacement bucket, contact US Ecology at 800-495-6059 or elvsbuckets@usecology.com.

This fact sheet is a summary provided as a courtesy to businesses. It is not intended as a substitute for 7 DE Admin. Code 1302, Delaware's *Regulations Governing Hazardous Waste* (DRGHW), Parts 260-266, 268, 273 and 279.

regulations.delaware.gov/AdminCode/title7/1000/1300/1302/



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