

Subject: MERCURY “TURN-IN” AMNESTY PROGRAM AND CHEMICAL WASTE REGULATORY INSPECTION

Dear Lab Managers,

Please be advised that the NIH Division of Environmental Protection (DEP) will be simultaneously conducting an NIH wide Mercury “Turn-in” Amnesty Program and a laboratory chemical waste management inspection during the months of April to October. The imperative goal of which is to comply with NIH Policy Manual, Chapter 3033, E.O. 13514 and with Federal and State hazardous waste regulations without any impact on NIH’s biomedical mission.

The purpose of the Mercury Amnesty is to:

- educate researchers about the [NIH Mercury Policy](#) and give them the opportunity to turn in any mercury-containing items or mercury compounds that are prohibited in labs according to the policy.
- support [NIH’s \(Mad as a Hatter\) Mercury-Free Campaign](#) by visiting labs in all buildings to collect mercury-containing equipment and mercury compounds for safety and proper disposal.
- recommend [mercury free alternatives](#) that are effective and environmentally friendly and won’t interrupt research or incur clean-up and decon costs in case of spills
- promote the process and requirements of [NIH Application for Special Exception for Procurement and Use of Mercury](#) which is limited to certain scientific and medical uses.

While the purpose of the laboratory chemical waste management inspection is to:

- dialogue with researchers about proper waste management procedures which are contained in the [NIH Waste Disposal Guide](#) and are also covered in the Laboratory Safety Training course provide to all researchers: <http://www.safetytraining.nih.gov>
- prepare labs for the annual hazardous waste inspection performed by Maryland Department of Environment (MDE) at the NIH Bethesda main campus.
- promote new NIH innovations like the DEP solvent recycling program and the [NIH FreeStuff](#) website for sharing surplus chemicals with the NIH community.
- avoid fines to the NIH if any violations are noted during the MDE inspections.

We appreciate your support and ask that you share this information with your staff and remind them to always label all chemical containers whether they are waste or stock chemicals and to call CWS @ 301-496-4710 to turn in prohibited mercury items unless an exemption is granted by DEP.

Thanking you in advance for your assistance and cooperation.

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