

# Mercury Products & Environmental Health

Compiled by Women's Voices for the Earth, 2006

## **GOVERNMENT STATS ON MERCURY**

Source: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (2002). Use and Release of Mercury in the United States.

EPA/600/R-02/104. December 2002. Available at:

<http://www.epa.gov/ORD/NRMRL/pubs/600r02104/600r02104.htm>

### U.S. Mercury reservoir: (mercury in use or in storage): 9,000 tons

Government stockpiles	4,850 tons	54%
Chlor-alkali manufacturing	2,000 tons	22%
Dental preparations	1,200 tons	13%
Switches and relays	630 tons	7%
Thermostats	230 tons	2%
Electrical lighting	65-75 tons	<1%
Thermometers	45-85 tons	<1%

### Solid Waste Releases of Mercury: 1,500 tons/year

Gold mining	1,342 tons	90%
Switches and relays	29-50 tons	3%
Coal combustion	38.8 tons	3%
Lead, zinc and copper mining	24 tons	2%
Chlor-alkali manufacturing	21.5 tons	1%
Electrical lighting	11.2 tons	1%
Thermometers	7-14 tons	1%
Thermostats	6-8 tons	<1%
Sewage Treatment	5.5 tons	<1%

### Air Releases of Mercury: 120 tons/year

Utility coal combustion	48 tons	40%
Non-utility coal combustion	21- 23 tons	21%
Mercury containing products*	20-29 tons	21%
Oil combustion	8-11 tons	8%
Hazardous waste combustion	7.1 tons	6%
Gold mining	6.2 tons	5%

\*Includes manufacture, use and disposal of electrical lighting, thermometers, thermostats, switches and relays, dental preparations and chlor-alkali manufacturing.

### Water releases of Mercury: 20 tons/year

Dental Preparations	7.4 tons	37%
Utility Coal Combustion	7.0 tons	35%
Sewage treatment	5.5 tons	28%
Chlor-Alkali Manufacturing	.1 tons	1%

## **MERCURY-ADDED PRODUCTS & STATE REDUCTION EFFORTS**

State-by-state summary- [www.mercuryinschools.uwex.edu/legis/legisbystate.htm](http://www.mercuryinschools.uwex.edu/legis/legisbystate.htm)

## **RESULTS OF A RECENT ZOGBY INTERNATIONAL POLL:**

- Most all Americans – 92 percent – want "informed consent" about potential risks from mercury in dental fillings or alternatives before any treatment begins.
- The poll also finds that 76% of consumers still don't know that any "silver" fillings in their mouths contain mercury.
- Nearly half (47%) of persons polled think mercury pollution poses a serious problem for the environment. (Full report- [www.mercurypolicy.org/new/documents/WhatPatientsDontKnow.pdf](http://www.mercurypolicy.org/new/documents/WhatPatientsDontKnow.pdf))

### **PUBLIC HEALTH INFORMATION**

Women's Voices for the Earth- [www.womenandenvironment.org](http://www.womenandenvironment.org)

Montana Dept. of Environmental Quality- [www.deq.state.mt.us/Recycle/index.asp](http://www.deq.state.mt.us/Recycle/index.asp)

Montana Fish Consumption guidelines- [www.dphhs.mt.gov/fish2005.pdf](http://www.dphhs.mt.gov/fish2005.pdf)

U.S. EPA Fact Sheets & Fish Advisories- [www.epa.gov/mercury/about.htm](http://www.epa.gov/mercury/about.htm),  
[www.epa.gov/waterscience/fish/](http://www.epa.gov/waterscience/fish/)

“Health Effects of Seafood Contamination with Methylmercury in the Faroes”-

[www.masgc.org/mercury/abs-clapp.htm](http://www.masgc.org/mercury/abs-clapp.htm)

King County Dental Project- [www.govlink.org/hazwaste/publications/DentalRpt\\_1\\_05.pdf](http://www.govlink.org/hazwaste/publications/DentalRpt_1_05.pdf)

### **ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**

Mercury Policy Project- [www.mercurypolicy.org](http://www.mercurypolicy.org)

NEWMOA- [www.newmoa.org/prevention/mercury/](http://www.newmoa.org/prevention/mercury/)