

DESCRIPTION OF DENTAL MERCURY PROGRAMS



Jurisdiction: San Francisco

Mandatory Program

Date: In effect since Jan 1, 2004

Program Description: The San Francisco Public Utilities Commission in collaboration with the San Francisco Department of the Environment and the San Francisco Dental Society designed a program to prevent pollution from local dental offices. Under this mandatory program, dental offices are required to apply for wastewater discharge permits and reduce their mercury content to the lowest practicable level (0.05 mg/l). In order to limit the mercury content, all dental offices are required to implement 11 BMPs and install amalgam separators (approved by the City) unless they can demonstrate that they discharge negligible amounts of mercury. San Francisco held an amalgam separator expo, various workshops and also administered an amalgam separator rebate program to support the local dental community.

Contact:

For permit program and mercury monitoring related questions

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<http://pollutionprevention.sfwater.org/>

For approved separator listing, vendor fair, workshops and other outreach

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Jurisdiction: Seattle

Mandatory Program

Date: In effect since July 1, 2003

Program Description: Since July 1, 2003, all dental practices in the King County sewerage system have been required to comply with the county limits for mercury. Dental offices that place or remove amalgam are given the option to install an approved amalgam separator or apply for a permit to discharge wastewater and sample regularly. Currently, 97% of the dental offices in King County are compliant with these regulations and over 800 of the 900 dental offices have installed

amalgam separator units. At the start of the program, King County had a voucher incentive program in which \$160,000 were given for the purchase 370 separators.

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Jurisdiction: St. Paul, Minneapolis

Voluntary Program

Date: In effect since Jan, 2003

Program Description: Metropolitan Council Environmental Services (POTW in the Minneapolis & St. Paul Minnesota metro area) formed a partnership with the Minnesota Dental Association (MDA) in 1998 to evaluate amalgam separators and dental mercury loadings. Based on the results of the study, MCES and the MDA initiated a "Voluntary Dental Office Amalgam Recovery Program" in January 2003 to promote improved waste management and the installation of separators that remove 99% of the amalgam present in wastewater. Since then, 66% (468/709) of the general practice dental offices in MCES' metropolitan area have installed a separator, and an additional 175 have committed to installing one (February 2005 data). MCES grants a variance from its mercury limit to the dental offices in its service area that install a separator. The MDA is also promoting the program to the rest of Minnesota, with a similar success rate. For more information on the program, go to the MDA's website: www.mndental.org and click on "Dental Professionals".

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Jurisdiction: Oakland/East Bay, CA

Voluntary Program

Date: In effect since Feb, 2002

Program Description: EBMUD issues blanket two-phase permits at no charge to dental offices. Phase one permits require information regarding use or removal of amalgam. Phase two permits require amalgam separators for facilities that use or remove amalgam as part of their core business, and require reports to document installation and maintenance of the separators. EBMUD also recommends best management practices developed by the ADA for wastewater issues.

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[http://www.ebmud.com/wastewater/industrial & commercial permits & fees/pollution prevention program/](http://www.ebmud.com/wastewater/industrial_&_commercial_permits_&_fees/pollution_prevention_program/)

Jurisdiction: Palo Alto, CA

Mandatory Program

Date: In effect since March 31, 2005

Program Description: The City of Palo Alto Regional Water Quality Control Board, City of Mountain View, City of Los Altos and East Palo Alto Sanitary District have collaborated on a Dental Amalgam Recovery Program. These dental amalgam waste reduction requirements were developed in cooperation from the Mid-Peninsula Dental Society and the California Dental Association. Dental offices that place or remove dental amalgam must implement five BMPs and, as of March 31, 2005, install an ISO 11143 approved amalgam separator.

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Other Programs:

Program: Mercury Reduction in Naval Dental Offices

Description: The Naval Institute for Dental and Biomedical Research (NIDBR) has been involved with research, development, testing and evaluation of dental wastewater pretreatment systems since 1993. The Institute is in the midst of a five-year effort to install dental-unit wastewater pretreatment systems at all U.S. Navy dental treatment facilities worldwide. NIDBR holds two patents on mercury removal technology, one of which has recently been licensed by a commercial vendor.

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