

# Tips for Identifying & Handling 'Difficult to Manage' Items in your Home

Covanta and the Center for EcoTechnology have developed a [Difficult-to-Manage Items booklet](#) which covers identification and management of most household waste streams, including links to Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) guidance.

## Elemental Mercury

- Elemental mercury can be found in garages, and storage areas, and is an extremely toxic and hazardous material.
- If spilled, mercury can vaporize and be inhaled into your respiratory system.
- Mercury must be kept in glass or plastic jars as it will corrode a metal container. Make sure that the jar has a lid and is not stored in a location where it can fall and break. It is also important to put in secondary containment, such as a plastic tub with lid or zipped plastic bag.
- If you have elemental liquid mercury, do not transport it or throw it in the trash!

**Call Complete Recycling Solutions at 1.866.277.9797 x705 for free\* pickup**

\*For elemental liquid mercury only, and location depending.

## What Else in my Home May Contain Mercury?

**Fluorescent light bulbs & tubes, including CFL bulbs**

**Thermostats & Thermometers**

**Button cell batteries & switches**

**Blood pressure cuffs**

**Glass column barometers and certain other antiques**



## How Can I Tell if it Has Mercury?

All fluorescent light bulbs contain trace amounts of mercury.

For other devices, look at the liquid in the device or glass tube – if it is silver, then it is most likely mercury. Some products are also labeled with (Hg) or 'contains mercury'.

## What Do I Do if I Find One of These Items?

If you come across a mercury-containing device in your home, do not worry! It is safe as long as it's intact, so make every effort to prevent breakage.

- Keep the item in secondary containment in case it breaks, such as a plastic tub with lid or zipped plastic bag.
- [Locate a mercury-containing device disposal site](#), or call the MassDEP Mercury Hotline at 866-9-Mercury or 866-963-7287.
- If mercury spills, follow [proper clean-up procedures](#) as detailed by the MassDEP.

## Other Resources for Home Cleanouts

[Recycle Smart MA: Can I Recycle This?](#) A guide for common recyclables and a search tool for difficult to manage items.

[MassDEP Textile Recovery](#) and [Beyond the Bin Directory](#). A location directory for items such as clothing, electronics & paint.

[Donation Guidance for Building Materials](#) to donate or purchase when remodeling.