

CFL Disposal/FAQs on Mercury

There has recently been some concern over the possibility that broken CFLs (compact fluorescent light bulbs) can be an important source of exposure to mercury, a toxic metal. CFLs contain a very small



amount of mercury sealed within the glass tubing. **Although mercury is a toxic pollutant, mercury exposure from broken CFLs are not likely to harm you and your family.**

What precautions should I take when using CFLs in my home?

CFLs are made of glass and can break if dropped or roughly handled. Be careful when removing the bulb from its packaging, installing it, or replacing it. Always screw and unscrew the light bulb by its base (not the glass), and never forcefully twist the CFL into a light socket.

CFL CLEANUP AND DISPOSAL OVERVIEW

Here are some important steps to reduce exposure to mercury vapor from a broken bulb:

Before cleanup:

- a. Have people and pets leave the room and air out the room for 5-10 minutes by opening a window or door to the outdoor environment.
- b. Shut off the central forced air heating/air conditioning (H&AC) system, if you have one.
- c. Collect materials needed to clean up broken bulb.
- d. Be thorough in collecting broken glass and visible powder. Place cleanup materials in a sealable container.



After cleanup:

- a. Promptly place all bulb debris and cleanup materials outdoors in a trash container or protected area until materials can be disposed of properly.
- b. For several hours, continue to air out the room where the bulb was broken and leave the H&AC system shut off.

Disposal of Your CFL

It is best to recycle your expired CFL. One recycling option is to use the City of Peoria's Household Waste Collection Program. The City of Peoria sponsors various collection days throughout the year. For additional information, please call the Solid Waste Division at 623-773-7431.

Another CFL disposal option is to take your bulbs to your local hardware store. At each Lowe's or Home Depot store, customers can simply bring in any expired, unbroken CFL bulb, and give them to the store associate behind the Returns Desk. The bulbs will then be managed responsibly by an environmental management company who will coordinate CFL packaging, transportation and recycling to maximize safety and ensure environmental compliance.

Nearest Drop-Off Locations:

Home Depot - 9201 West Peoria Avenue, Peoria, AZ 85345

Lowe's - 8497 West Thunderbird Road, Peoria, AZ 85381