



Answers to Contractor Questions About Recycling Wall-Mounted Mercury Thermostats

Why is the HVAC industry doing this?

We want to see every out-of-service wall-mounted mercury thermostat recycled. This is good for the environment because it prevents contaminating materials from potentially entering the environment. It's good for consumers and HVAC contractors because it provides a convenient way to dispose of used mercury thermostats. Our industry has the infrastructure needed to recycle a very high percentage of used mercury thermostats.

What specifically is my role?

Whenever you replace a wall-mounted mercury thermostat for service or upgrade, retain the old thermostat. When you make routine visits to your wholesaler, place these used thermostats in the green plastic container, which the wholesaler will have placed somewhere in each participating branch. If you are eligible to obtain your own container, you may order the container. Then just follow the simple instructions for proper handling and shipment.

Should the mercury bulbs be separated from the thermostats and returned for recycling?

No. It is important to return the entire thermostat since it provides protection for the mercury bulb during shipment. ***Loose bulbs will not be accepted under this program.*** If you have loose bulbs, you should call your county waste management agency. Leaking thermostats will not be accepted under this program. If you have leaking thermostats, you should call your local waste management agency.

What about other mercury-containing products, such as batteries and fluorescent lights?

This program is only for wall-mounted mercury switch thermostats. ***Do NOT return batteries, fluorescent lights, or any other controls containing mercury.*** Contact your local waste management agency to find out about the proper disposal of these items.

Who should I contact for questions?

Contact the TRC at 1-800-238-8192

Will there be any paperwork or administration involved?

Simply place the mailing label on the collection container so that the carrier can deliver the full container to the TRC. The TRC will automatically send a new container.

Is there any cost?

There is no cost to you for this program unless you are eligible to purchase a container. If you purchase a container there is a one-time \$25 fee. All other costs are born by the Thermostat Recycling Corporation (TRC) including the cost of the replacement container.

What should I do if a homeowner brings me a wall-mounted thermostat that they have removed themselves?

We request that you recycle it through the TRC program by bringing it to a participating wholesaler with your other recovered thermostats, or if you have a collection container, place the thermostat in the container.

Are there other ways for a consumer to handle a used thermostat?

Sometimes. They could call their local waste management agency; many local governments have provided for mercury waste recycling by consumers.

What about in warranty thermostats?

Do not mix used, out-of-warranty thermostats with warranty product. If a mercury thermostat fails in warranty, tag it using normal in-warranty tagging procedures and return it to your wholesaler or manufacturer for a replacement. If you place in-warranty products in the recycling bins, you and your wholesaler will not receive warranty credit or replacement.

Am I subject to any liability for participating?

No. This program is operated in accordance with the Universal Waste Rule. The Universal Waste Rule specifically allows you to collect used thermostats from jobs and to hold and transport them for recycling.