



www.agriculture.nh.gov

## Maple Syrup Thermometer Exchange Program

Maple producers often use candy thermometers to boil maple sap at the correct temperature and to know when the maple syrup or candy is ready. Like the manometers, older candy thermometers contain mercury and their large size means they hold considerably more of the toxic element than a fever thermometer. If a mercury thermometer breaks, the entire batch of maple product becomes contaminated with mercury, requiring its disposal as a hazardous waste, as well as creating considerable expense and difficulty to remove the mercury from equipment surfaces.

DES has funds available to help pay for the recycling and replacement of these thermometers. **To exchange your older, mercury-containing device, please contact DES for recycling assistance at (603) 271-0878 or (800) 273-9469, or email [nhppp@des.state.nh.us](mailto:nhppp@des.state.nh.us).**

## For More Information

For information on mercury and pollution prevention in New Hampshire:  
NH Pollution Prevention Program  
N.H. Department of Environmental Services  
PO Box 95  
Concord, NH 03302-0095  
(603) 271-0878  
800-273-9469  
[nhppp@des.state.nh.us](mailto:nhppp@des.state.nh.us)

[www.des.nh.gov/nhppp](http://www.des.nh.gov/nhppp) and click on "Farms."

**Help keep New Hampshire farms mercury-free!**



Printed on 100%, process chlorine free paper.

# Getting Mercury off New Hampshire's Farms



2006

N.H. Department of Environmental Services

## What is Mercury?

Mercury is a naturally occurring element that has been useful because of its unique property of being a liquid metal at room temperature. Unfortunately, mercury is toxic to living organisms. And, like other heavy metals, such as cadmium, chromium and lead, it stays in toxic form, continuously building up in our bodies and those of other animals.

Although mercury is naturally occurring, people have added mercury to the environment through many uses. Mercury is emitted from coal-fired power plants, municipal waste incinerators and other fossil fuel burners. Mercury is also found in many common devices such as thermostats, fluorescent lighting and switches, which when disposed of improperly, pose a threat to public health and the environment.



## Where Do You Find Mercury on Farms?

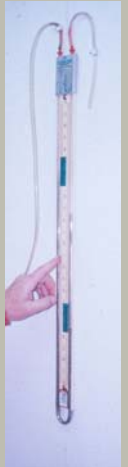
Mercury is frequently found in a variety of agricultural equipment – primarily in gauges and switches used to measure temperature, adjust air pressure or turn electrical devices on and off. Examples include thermometers, milk line vacuum gauges, fluorescent lighting, and switches for refrigeration units, boilers, automatic fans, and even tractors and cars.

Older manometers (the U-shaped devices used to monitor air pressure in automatic milk lines) and candy thermometers (used in maple syrup production) contain the largest amount of mercury found on farms. That is why the NH Department of Environmental Services has started programs to remove these instruments from agricultural areas.

For more information, go to  
[www.des.nh.gov/nhppp](http://www.des.nh.gov/nhppp)

## The DES Manometer Disposal Program

Mercury-containing manometers contain nearly a pound of mercury! The open-ended design increases mercury vapor exposure to farmers and animals near the unit. Fortunately, most New Hampshire farmers have replaced their mercury manometers with digital devices, but the fate of the older mercury-containing devices is not known.



If you have a mercury-containing manometer on your farm, DES has funds available to help New Hampshire dairy farmers recycle their old devices. **Please contact DES for recycling assistance at (603) 271-0878 or (800) 273-9469, or email [nhppp@des.state.nh.us](mailto:nhppp@des.state.nh.us).**

