



The days of playing with mercury in science class and using mercury thermometers when we're sick have come to an end. Mercury is a very unique element, and for that reason, it was used in a wide variety of applications. These applications have ranged from light bulbs to control switches and thermometers to teeth fillings. As useful as it may be, the negative environmental effects of mercury far outweigh its usefulness. The evidence of mercury in the environment has been noted in our water ways, top predators in the wild, and even in the atmosphere. Since the discovery of the effects that mercury has had on the environment, environmentalists and controlling authorities have been trying to minimize the exposure to the environment. With that being said, Wastewater Treatment Plants (WWTPs) have been an area of concern for minimizing the effects of mercury on the environment. WWTPs are what they like to call a "Point-Source" for mercury. Due to the amount of water that goes through a WWTP on any given day, the little bits of mercury discharged here and there can really add up when it all goes to one place, and that place is the WWTP. The folks at the City of Niles WWTP are doing their best to minimize the effects of mercury on the environment by sampling every potential source at least once a year, on top of checking industries and businesses that may have the potential to send mercury to the WWTP. We are asking for your help in aiding us in the process by making sure that you do your part to help keep our environment healthy so that those in the future may enjoy it in the same way that we do today. The South East Berrien County Landfill offers Household Chemical Disposal Days and they can be contacted at (269)-983-7111 x8234 or www.berriencounty.org/recycle . The City of Niles WWTP is also available for contact at (269)-683-8015 if you have any further questions related to mercury disposal.