



**Compact fluorescent lamps (CFLs)**, along with other energy-efficient lighting such as linear fluorescent and high intensity discharge lamps contain a very small amount of mercury, an element essential to achieving energy savings. All fluorescent light bulbs contain some elemental mercury like the mercury found in older thermometers. It is a necessary component to the operation of most energy-efficient lighting. Mercury can exist in vapor, liquid or solid forms. Although companies have greatly reduced the amount of mercury used in CFLs, they are not yet able to completely eliminate the need for mercury. While these lamps help consumers and businesses cut their lighting energy usage and reduce energy costs, it is important that products containing mercury be properly disposed of to protect public health and the environment.

**By recycling a mercury containing lamp, you'll ensure that 99.98% of the mercury used in the lamp is recovered.**

The mercury is contained within the lamp and is not exposed to the environment unless the lamp is broken at the end of its life. The release of mercury is most likely to occur when the lamp is thrown in a garbage truck or a dumpster or accidentally broken while in use or being replaced. Recycling CFLs is the best way to prevent the release of mercury into the environment. It also allows the mercury to be reused. This is good environmental stewardship. Many municipal solid waste programs, and retailers such as Ikea and Home Depot, now collect bulbs to recycle.



Find out what household hazardous waste collection and recycling programs are available in your area by visiting the "Where You Live" website  
[www.epa.gov/cflrecycling/live.htm](http://www.epa.gov/cflrecycling/live.htm)



Check EARTH911.com for recycling options in your zip code.



**(850) 283-6236 DSN 523**

Air Force Facility Energy Center

# CFL

**RECYCLE INFORMATION**



**Compact Fluorescent Lamps**

 Proper Disposal 

 Clean-Up Procedures 



## COMPACT FLOURESCENT LAMP

# Clean-up

## PROCEDURES

### What do I do if a lamp breaks?

According to the Environmental Protection Agency ([www.epa.gov](http://www.epa.gov)), if the break happens indoors, close off the room to other parts of the building. Open a window and have people and pets leave the room. Don't let anyone walk through the breakage area on their way out. Leave the area for at least 15 minutes to allow the mercury vapor to dissipate.

### Clean-Up Steps for Hard Surfaces

- Carefully scoop up glass pieces and powder using stiff paper or cardboard and place them in a glass jar with metal lid (such as a canning jar) or in a sealed plastic bag.
- Use sticky tape to pick up any remaining small glass fragments and powder.
- Wipe the area clean with damp paper towels. Place towels in the jar or plastic bag.
- Do not use a vacuum or broom to clean up the broken bulb on hard surfaces.

### Clean-up Steps for Carpeting

- Follow the same steps for hard surfaces but note: vacuuming is allowed once all visible materials are removed.
- Remove the vacuum bag (or empty and wipe the canister), and put the bag or vacuum debris in a sealed plastic bag.

### Future Cleaning of Carpeting: Ventilate the Room During and After Vacuuming

- The next several times you vacuum, shut off the heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) system and open a window before vacuuming.
- Keep the HVAC system shut off and the window open for at least 15 minutes after vacuuming is completed.

### Clean-up Steps for Clothing & Bedding

- If clothing or bedding materials come in direct contact with broken glass or mercury-containing powder the clothing or bedding should be thrown away. Do not wash the materials because mercury fragments in the clothing may contaminate the washing machine and/or pollute sewage.
- If no direct contact occurred, you can wash the material, such as the clothing you are wearing when you cleaned up the broken CFL.
- If shoes come into direct contact with mercury-containing powder from the bulb, wipe them off with damp paper towels or disposable wet wipes. Place the towels or wipes in a glass jar or plastic bag for disposal.

### Disposal of Clean-up Materials

- Immediately place all clean-up materials outdoors in a trash container or protected area for the next normal trash pickup.
- Wash your hands after disposing of the jars or plastic bags containing clean-up materials.
- Check with your local or state government about disposal requirements in your specific area. Some states do not allow such trash disposal. Instead, they require that broken and unbroken mercury-containing bulbs be taken to a local recycling center.

