

Amalgam Waste, Best Management

ADA Best Management Practices for Amalgam Waste

Dental amalgam is used to repair a tooth damaged by decay. It is a mixture of metals that are bound together by elemental mercury. It is a hard, durable material that is safe and affordable.

To protect the environment, water treatment plants keep an eye on mercury levels in the water. Dental amalgam has little effect on the environment. Less than one percent of the mercury released into the environment comes from dental amalgam.¹ Even this amount is not in the form found in fish, which is the greatest concern.

Dentists care about the environment. They want to limit the release of dental amalgam waste to the environment. To help them do this, the ADA has developed "[Best Management Practices for Amalgam Waste](#)," or BMPs, which outline ways to handle and dispose of amalgam waste.

1. Office of Air Quality Planning and Standards, Office of Research and Development. Mercury Study Report to Congress. Volume II: An inventory of anthropogenic mercury emissions in the United States. Washington, D.C.: Environmental Protection Agency. Publication No. EPA-452/R-97-004. December 1997, p. ES-6.