



# Best Management Practices for Dental Facilities

Amalgam waste should be recycled as much as possible and must never be placed in the regular trash, biohazard containers, infectious waste containers (red bags), or flushed down the toilet or drain.

Dental facilities are required to implement the following Best Management Practices (BMPs):

- **Eliminate the use of bulk elemental mercury:** Bulk elemental mercury, also referred to as liquid or raw mercury, has to be recycled or disposed of as hazardous waste. Only use precapsulated dental amalgam in the smallest appropriate size.
- **Properly manage chair straps:** Use chair side traps to retain amalgam and recycle the content. Change or empty chair-side traps frequently and store the trap and its contents with amalgam waste. Do not rinse chair side traps over drains or sinks. If you use reusable traps, make sure any material used to clean the traps is disposed of with amalgam waste.
- **Do not use peroxide-, iodide-, or chlorine-based products to clean vacuum lines:** Do not use sodium hypochlorite (bleach) or other products containing peroxide, iodide, or chlorine to cleanse vacuum lines, as these products have been shown to release mercury in the amalgam.
- **Properly maintain and dispose of screens:** Change vacuum pumps filters and screens as needed or as directed by the manufacturer and store with amalgam waste. Seal and store filters and screens, as well as their contents (including any water that may be present) with amalgam waste in an airtight container.
- **Maintain the vacuum system:** For dry vacuum turbine units, have a qualified maintenance technician, amalgam recycler, or hazardous waste disposal service pump out and clean the air-water separator tank at least once every six months.
- **Properly discard amalgam waste:** Recycling is the preferred method for discarding amalgam waste. Have a licensed recycling contractor, mail in service, or hazardous waste hauler remove your amalgam waste.
- **Maintain amalgam separators:** Maintain written or computerized records of amalgam separator inspections, maintenance, and repairs. Additionally, obtain receipts of or other certified documentation from your recycler or hauler of all amalgam waste recycling or disposal shipments.
- **Store amalgam waste in airtight containers:** Store amalgam in airtight containers and follow your recyclers or haulers instructions for disinfection of waste and separation of contact or non-contact amalgam. Do not use disinfectant solutions with oxidizers, such as bleach, to disinfect amalgam.
- **Properly dispose of mixer solution:** Have a licensed hauler transport spent fixer solution to be recycled or managed as hazardous waste. Never pour fixer solution down the drain.
- **Train staff and document training:** Train staff to properly handle and dispose of amalgam materials and fixer containing solutions. Maintain a training log and keep this log available for inspections.

For more information, please visit our website: <https://www.hayward-ca.gov/services/city-services/clean-water-program>