MERCURY

What is Mercury?
It is a naturally occurring metal that has multiple forms. The most common form is methylmercury, which is mainly produced by microscopic organisms in the water and soil.

Chemical Information
• Heavy, shiny, silver-white, odorless liquid.
• Nonflammable, but releases highly toxic vapor, especially if heated. This vapor is dangerous when inhaled.

Stability & Reactivity
• If heated mercury becomes a colorless, odorless gas.
• Mercury is less reactive than other metals (i.e. cadmium and zinc).

Handling & Storage
Keep metallic mercury in a safe and secured area such as a closed container in a locked storage room that is well-ventilated.

Mercury Spill Clean-up Guide
WHAT TO DO:
• Have everyone else leave the area; don’t let anyone walk through the mercury on their way out.
• Open all windows and doors to the outside.
• Turn down the temperature.
• Shut all doors to other parts of the house and leave the area.
• Call the local fire department followed by the local health department after leaving the area.

DO NOT:
• Use a vacuum cleaner, this will aerosolize the mercury and increase exposure.
• Use a broom, this will break the mercury in smaller droplets and increase spread.
• Pour mercury down a drain, can cause pollution of the sewage treatment plant or septic tank.
• Walk around in case your shoes have become contaminated. Contaminated clothing can spread mercury.

For assistance managing exposures to hazardous substances, please call North Carolina Poison Control at 1-800-222-1222.
In case of a life threatening emergency, dial 9-1-1 immediately.