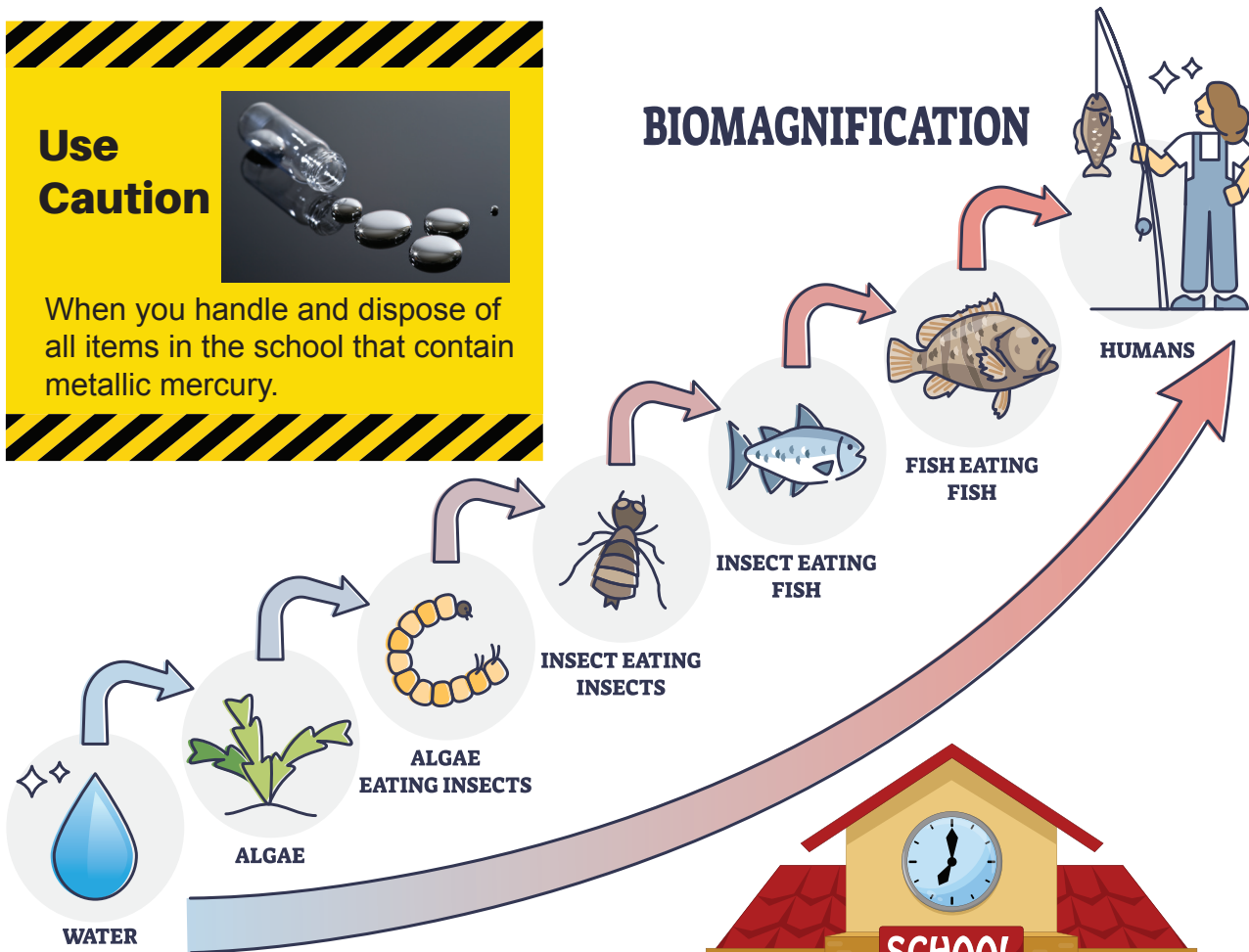


Use Caution

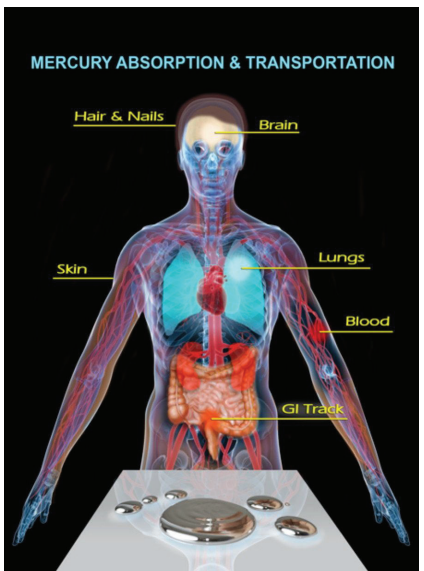
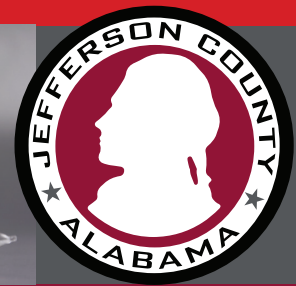


When you handle and dispose of all items in the school that contain metallic mercury.

BIOMAGNIFICATION



Prevent Mercury Contamination at School



MERCURY CONCENTRATION

Mercury is easily absorbed by plants and fish, and the levels of mercury get higher within each animal of the food chain. Consequently, exposure to mercury through the food chain can cause death, reduce fertility, slow growth and development, and cause abnormal behavior that affects survival.

For more information:

epa.gov/mercury/mercury-your-environment-steps-you-can-take
alabamapublichealth.gov/tox/assets/al-fish-advisory-2021.pdf
earth911.com



Jefferson County Environmental Services

Has implemented a mercury minimization program to educate our citizens on the danger of mercury contaminants and the best way to safely dispose of mercury.

What is mercury?

- A natural element that is mined from ores and is toxic to humans and natural systems.
- It is a liquid at room temperature and appears shiny, silver-gray in color and is odorless it can be absorbed through the skin if handled.
- Mercury, when heated, becomes volatile and changes into a colorless, odorless gas that can be toxic.



Mercury is present in the air we breathe and the water in our creeks, lakes, and rivers. Much of the mercury that is in our environment has developed through improper disposal of products containing mercury. This mercury builds up and contaminates the fish, wildlife and humans who eat the fish. It can persist for years in the environment and accumulate to higher concentrations as it moves up the food chain. Mercury does not break down; once it enters the environment it remains there and continues to damage the ecosystem.

Where is mercury in school?

- Thermometers in science labs
- Sphygmomanometer (blood pressure gauges) in nurses' office
- Barometers
- Fluorescent lights
- Thermostats



Use caution around items containing mercury. Never break open products that contain mercury. Do not pour mercury into any sink or storm drain. Do not flush mercury down the toilet; instead turn mercury products into a household hazardous waste collection site. Science labs should make every effort to discontinue the use of mercury thermometers in science experiments and use alcohol or a spirit thermometer instead. These thermometers provide accurate temperature readings without the danger of toxic materials in the classroom should the glass break. Direct human contact with mercury or excessive intake can affect the nervous system, kidneys, lungs, brain, and the immune system and is especially dangerous to pregnant women. Mercury poisoning can come from food sources or direct exposure by touching or breathing mercury vapors.



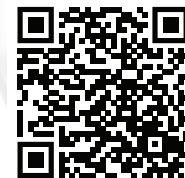
How can mercury affect your health?

- Difficulty breathing
- Tingling or shaking of the hands
- Impaired vision
- Memory loss
- Permanent brain damage
- Impaired immune system
- Kidney disease

What to do if mercury spills?

- Have everyone leave the area, don't let anyone walk through the spill
- Do NOT allow students to help clean up the spill
- Notify school administration of the contamination
- NEVER use a vacuum, mop, or broom to clean up a mercury spill
- Wear rubber, latex or nitrile gloves
- Use a cardboard or stiff paper to gather beads of mercury together
- An eyedropper or bulb syringe is useful for picking up mercury
- Place gathered mercury in a sealed container
- Ventilate the room
- Take sealed container with mercury to a hazardous waste collection site
- NEVER pour mercury down the drain
- Any clothing or carpet that came in contact with the mercury should be discarded

Scan QR code for more information and find your nearest hazardous waste collection sites.



Jefferson County Environmental Services,
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Birmingham, AL 35203, 205-731-2880