

## Best Management Practices MCES Amalgam Recovery Program

All dental offices participating in the Metropolitan Council Environmental Services Amalgam Recovery Program must implement Best Management Practices (BMPs) for amalgam waste handling and disposal. These include the use of commercial waste service providers to recycle and/or dispose of amalgam and other solid or hazardous wastes.

The BMPs listed below are from the American Dental Association<sup>1</sup> and are updated to include both the MCES and the federal requirements of the EPA Dental Effluent Guidelines (40CFR Part 441).

Do	Don't
<i>Do</i> use chair-side traps, a vacuum pump filter (if using a liquid-ring vacuum pump) and an amalgam separator to retain amalgam. Dispose any wastewater from rinsing devices containing amalgam into the vacuum system to allow for treatment by the separator.	<i>Don't</i> rinse devices containing amalgam, such as traps, filters, separators, amalgam carriers, amalgam wells, tools, etc., over drains or sinks.
<i>Do</i> inspect your vacuum system at least weekly, including chair-side traps, vacuum pump filter and amalgam separator to verify they're operating properly. <i>Do</i> make sure that the separator is properly sized, the wastewater settles properly, and that all wastewater passes through the filtration system of the separator. <i>Do</i> keep and follow the separator manufacturer's installation and operating manuals.	<i>Don't</i> let your amalgam separator overflow or discharge without adequate settling and/or filtration. <i>Don't</i> allow untreated or partially treated wastewater to pass through or out of the separator into the vacuum system.
<i>Do</i> maintain a service, repair and replacement log for the amalgam separator for three years.	
<i>Do</i> use precapsulated alloys.	<i>Don't</i> use bulk mercury.
<i>Do</i> recycle used disposable amalgam capsules.	<i>Don't</i> put used disposable amalgam capsules in biohazard containers.
<i>Do</i> salvage, store, and recycle non-contact (scrap) amalgam.	<i>Don't</i> put non-contact amalgam waste in biohazard containers, infectious waste containers (red bags) or regular garbage.
<i>Do</i> salvage (contact) amalgam pieces from restorations after removal and recycle their contents.	<i>Don't</i> put contact amalgam waste in biohazard containers, infectious waste containers (red bags) or regular garbage.
<i>Do</i> recycle teeth that contain amalgam restorations (Note: Ask your recycler whether extracted teeth with amalgam restorations require disinfection).	<i>Don't</i> dispose of extracted teeth that contain amalgam in biohazard containers, infectious waste containers (red bags), sharps containers or regular garbage.
<i>Do</i> use vacuum line cleaners that minimize dissolution of amalgam and have a pH between 6 and 8.	<i>Don't</i> use acidic or caustic vacuum line cleaners. <i>Don't</i> use oxidizing vacuum line cleaners, including but not limited to bleach, chlorine, iodine or peroxide, even if the pH is between 6 and 8.
<i>Do</i> treat silver-bearing waste X-Ray fixer prior to sewerage or ship waste fixer out for disposal.	<i>Don't</i> flush untreated silver-bearing X-Ray fixer down the drain or toilet.

<sup>1</sup>AMERICAN DENTAL ASSOCIATION. BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES FOR AMALGAM WASTE. DOWNLOADED NOVEMBER 2018 FROM <https://www.ada.org/en/member-center/oral-health-topics/amalgam-separators>