How to Handle Fluorescent and High-Intensity Discharge Lamps

Each year, Florida businesses discard millions of lamps containing small amounts of mercury. When lamps are broken or placed in a landfill or incinerator, the mercury can contaminate the air, surface water and ground water. If you operate a business that generates spent mercury-containing lamps, you should be aware of the rules regulating the collection, storage and disposal of these items in Florida.

Storage of Waste Lamps

» Store lamps in an area and in a manner that will prevent them from breaking.

» Do not put too many or too few lamps in the container. Do not tape lamps together for storage or shipment.

» Label the container as “Spent Mercury-Containing Lamps for Recycling” or “Waste (or Used) Mercury Lamps.”

» Label the accumulation start date on the container.

» Store onsite for no longer than one year.

Storage of Broken Lamps

» Do not intentionally break lamps. Mercury is a toxic metal.

» Immediately clean up any broken lamps and store them in a tightly sealed container.

» Label the container as “Broken spent Mercury-Containing Lamps for Recycling” and include the date.

» Do not reopen the container.

» Store onsite for no longer than one year.

Record Keeping

» Keep receipts for shipments of lamps off-site for three years to show the Florida Department of Environmental Protection and local inspectors that lamps were properly handled.

» Receipts should include the following information:
  • Quantity of lamps shipped or received;
  • Date of shipment; and
  • Name and address of handler or recycling facility receiving shipped lamps.

Florida Administrative Code Rules

To review the rules for spent mercury-containing lamps, visit the Florida Administrative Code website and search for Chapter Number 62-737.