



South Jordan Mercury Emergency Response Site Update

USEPA Region 8

November 1st, 2022

WEBSITE

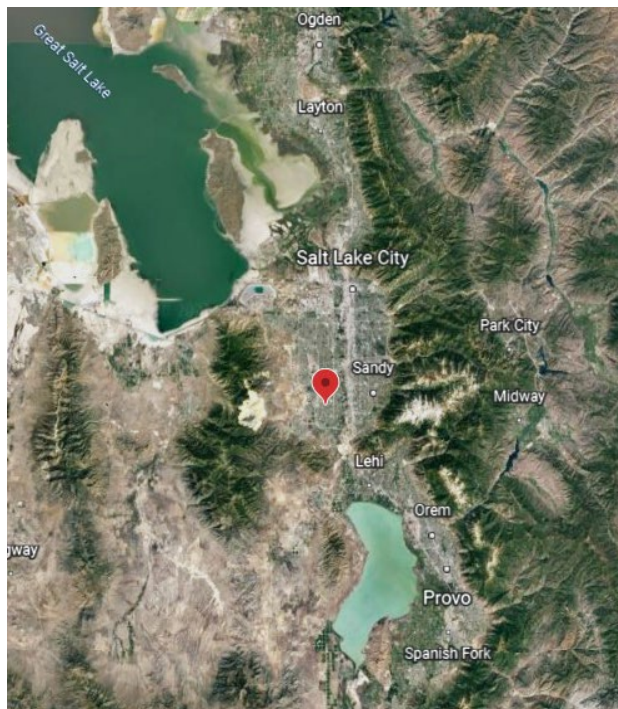
EPA [South Jordan Mercury](#) Response webpage

SITE DESCRIPTION

A homeowner was going through the belongings of an ill family member when they discovered a small jar of elemental mercury. The homeowner moved the jar to his garage in South Jordan (a suburb of Salt Lake City, Utah) and placed it atop a tall sturdy cabinet until he could identify a proper hazardous waste facility. On approximately October 23, 2022, children playing in the garage dislodged and broke the container spreading tiny beads of mercury throughout the garage. The playtime incident was not discovered by their parents until approximately one week later.

On October 31, 2022, the Fire Department responded to the residence, secured a pool of mercury at the immediate spill location, and collected indoor air readings as high as 10,000ng/m³ (nanograms per cubic meter) in the residence and 29,000 ng/m³ in the garage.

The Salt Lake County Health Department requested assistance from EPA and an EPA Response Team mobilized to the home on November 1, 2022.



SAFETY MESSAGE

Indoor air quality inside the residence and the garage do exceed EPA [guidance](#). The family has relocated to a nearby hotel.

EPA has deployed a skilled Response Team who will be working in Tyvek suits and respirators for their own protection. Air quality readings surrounding the home have not exceed background levels. EPA will continue to monitor air quality around the property.

SITE OBJECTIVES

- Collect all elemental mercury that can be identified in the garage and home.
- Use mercury cleaning agents to reduce any trace of mercury from hard living surfaces.
- Clean drain traps and remove carpeting throughout the residence.
- Screen clothing and personal belongings. Ventilate belongings in a heated environment as necessary and to the extent practical. Document and dispose of personal belongings that cannot be cleared for future use.
- Conduct 8-hr clearance monitoring.



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OPERATIONS PERIOD OBJECTIVES

1. Conduct HazMat entries into the home and garage to perform an initial screening and Site Reconnaissance.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

EPA's Response Team entered the residence at 1630 on November 1, 2022. Ambient air throughout all three levels of the house were consistently screened at concentrations between 6,220 - 11,257 ng/ m³. One storage room in the basement did screen at a higher concentration of 21, 174 ng/m³. Ambient air in the garage screened at higher concentrations of 33,870 - 41,640 ng/ m³. Tiny beads of elemental mercury were observed to be mixed with personal effects throughout the garage.

EPA attempted to release limited clothing and personal items to the family; however, all selected items screened at concentrations above safe levels, based on [EPA guidance](#). The basement and first floor of the homes are laminate, and the second floor is carpet. None of drains nor the washing machine screened at concentrations above the current ambient mercury levels discovered in the house upon initial entry.

PLANNED ACTIVITES

The weather is forecasted to be cold and wet on November 2, 2022. The Response Team will be establishing its work zones, decontamination areas and response support infrastructure. Tents will be erected in the front and back yards to help process contaminated items in the home.