



# South Jordan Mercury Emergency Response Site Update

## USEPA Region 8

November 2, 2022

### WEBSITE

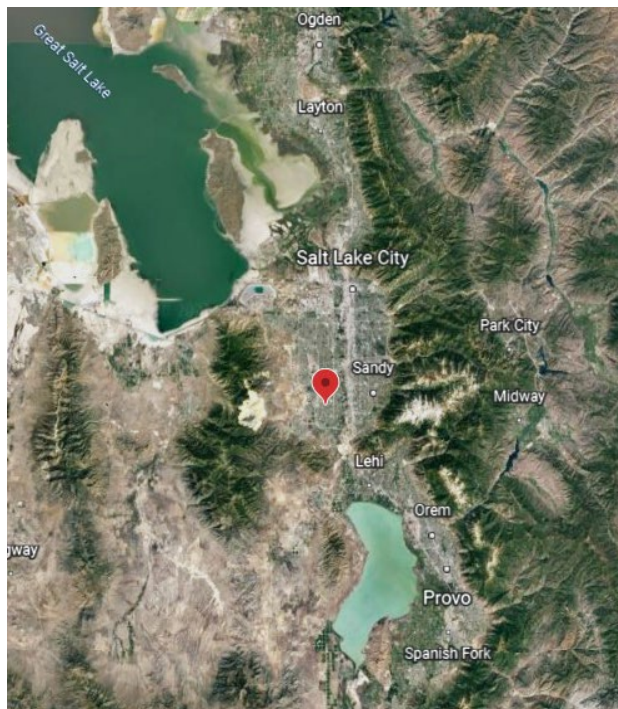
EPA [South Jordan Mercury](#) Response webpage

### 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/m<sup>3</sup> (nanograms per cubic meter) in the residence and 29,000 ng/m<sup>3</sup> 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. Establish work zones, decontamination areas and response support infrastructure.
2. Begin removing elemental mercury and addressing contaminated items in the garage.

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Weather conditions on November 2 were cold and wet with occasional snow. EPA's Response Team established two areas to process contaminated materials in the home. In the back of the property, the Team erected two heated tents that will be used to air out contaminated soft materials such as clothes and pillows. These items will be re-tested before being returned to the home. Heating the tents helps the process and improves the accuracy of the tests when the weather is cold. A third tent was erected in front of the home to process contaminated items that cannot be salvaged. These items will be transferred to covered and secure HazMat roll-offs for disposal at an appropriate disposal facility.

The Response Team cleared safe passages in the garage and began collecting beads of elemental mercury from the garage floor and household items located around the spill location. There are numerous tiny beads of mercury throughout the garage.

## PLANNED ACTIVITIES

The EPA Response Team will be continuing to address contamination in the garage on November 3. Household items that can be salvaged will be processed in back. Items that cannot will be processed in front. Once the garage has been cleared of obvious contamination, the Team will use mercury cleaning agents on hard surfaces and seal the floor of the garage.

The Team will next move inside the home. Night operations will begin on November 3.