



# South Jordan Mercury Emergency Response Site Update

## USEPA Region 8 November 7-9, 2022

### WEBSITE

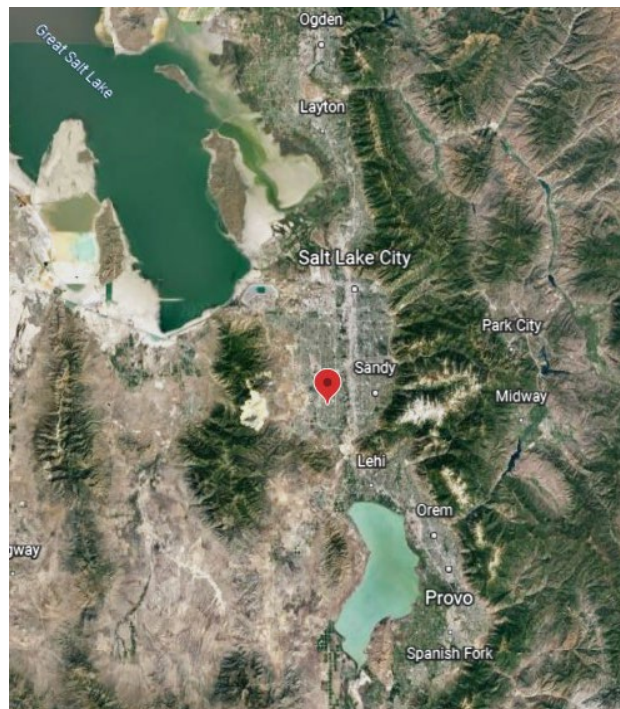
EPA [South Jordan Mercury](#) Response webpage

### 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 exceed EPA [guidance](#). The family has relocated to a nearby hotel.

EPA has deployed a 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. Process, test and release household items to family as necessary.
2. Complete gross decontamination of garage.
3. Complete gross decontamination of the home.
4. Initiate heating and venting cycles in the residence and HVAC system in preparation for clearance sampling.
5. Screen the home and cars of visitors and places the family visited where mercury may have been tracked.

### ACCOMPLISHMENTS

EPA's Response Team continued to remove items required by the family during their relocation. These items were processed with heat/vent treatments, successfully tested and returned to the homeowners. The Team continued to screen items that were in the garage and storage room when the spill occurred to determine if the levels are too high to be salvaged.

The Team removed shelving from the garage near where the spill occurred and steps from the garage to the basement where mercury was tracked. Mercury beads were found in the crack under the footing of the shelving and were removed with a Mercury Vacuum.



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The Team used a mercury cleaning agent to decontaminate the floors and accessible HVAC ducts of the home. The Team also reapplied a mercury cleaning agent to the floor of the garage. The Team has begun performing multiple cycles of heating and venting in the residence and HVAC system before initiating clearance sampling.

**EPA recommends and will screen any homes and cars where the mercury from this incident may have been tracked.** No additional homes or cars were screened during this operational period.

### **PLANNED ACTIVITIES**

EPA's Response Team will seal cracks and apply an epoxy coating to the floor and lower walls of the garage where the spill occurred. The Team will then continue to perform multiple cycles of heating and venting in the residence and HVAC system before initiating clearance sampling. Clearance sampling may be performed during the next operational period.