

# EPA Emergency Response Situation Report

## Mercury Spill in Lead, SD

December 21, 2022

### Safety Message

Levels of mercury in student's residence are hazardous. Levels of mercury in the Lead-Deadwood High School (High School) are elevated. Do not enter the residence or High School without appropriate personal protective equipment.

EPA is offering to screen additional homes in Lead, SD for elemental mercury. If you would like to have your home screened or have questions about the process for home screening, **please contact: 605-646-3160**. We will be taking screening requests until Friday, December 23rd, at 10:00PM.

### Response Objectives

- Safety of the public and response personnel is top priority.
- Stabilize source areas to prevent the spread of mercury.
- Minimize or, if possible, eliminate threats to human health posed by the mercury.
- Provide timely and accurate communication of response information to the public and affected stakeholders.



**Photo Description:** Elemental Mercury (where the pencil is pointing) in addition to welding beads, located in the Welding Shop.

### Operations Period December 21, 2022

#### Period Objectives

The objectives of this Operations Period were to:

1. Continue decontamination efforts at the High School.
2. Response operations at the student's residence were continued.
3. Screen additional residences.
4. Screen the Welding Shop at the High School.

#### Period Accomplishments

At the High School, EPA's Response Team is using a mercury vacuum to remove tiny, but visible, beads of elemental mercury. Hard surfaces are being treated with a solution to chemically react with the mercury and create a non-hazardous product. After this treatment, rooms are heated and vented before additional screening is performed.

EPA was informed of mercury brought into the Welding Shop, which is a separate building from the main High School Structure. The Welding Shop was assessed and will require a removal action.

The Response Team continued to process household items and decontamination efforts at the student's residence.

To date, EPA has been contacted by 10 property owners for additional screening. Eight (8) homes have been screened to date. All were positive for mercury. Four (4) homes had minimal levels and no action was required. Two (2) homes were cleared after removal of clothing and book bag. One (1) home requires additional screening.

### Next Steps

The High School will be closed on December 22<sup>nd</sup> due to the Holiday Break. EPA's Response Team will continue decontamination procedures during the Holiday Break.

Due to predicted extreme weather conditions, a safety stand-down day may occur on December 22<sup>nd</sup>.