

EPA Emergency Response Situation Report

Mercury Spill in Lead, SD

December 24, 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, at no cost to property owners. If you have questions about the process for home screening, **please contact: 605-646-3160**.

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 24, 2022

Period Objectives

The objectives of this Operations Period were to:

1. Continue decontamination efforts at the High School, inclusive of the welding shop.
2. Response operations at the student's residence were continued.
3. EPA screened the school buses, Elementary School, and Middle 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 continued the removal action at the Welding Shop of the High School. Hard surfaces were treated with a solution to chemically react with the mercury and create a non-hazardous product. The room will be heated and vented before additional screening is performed.

EPA screened the school buses, Elementary School, and Middle School. No levels of mercury were detected above the Action Levels. No further action will be taken at the buses, Elementary School, and Middle School.

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

To date, EPA has been contacted by 12 property owners for additional screening. Twelve (12) homes have been screened to date. All were positive for mercury. Eight (8) homes had minimal levels and no action was required. Four (4) homes were cleared after removal of clothing and book bag.

Next Steps

The High School will be closed on December 25th due to the Holiday Break. EPA's Response Team will continue decontamination procedures during the Holiday Break.