



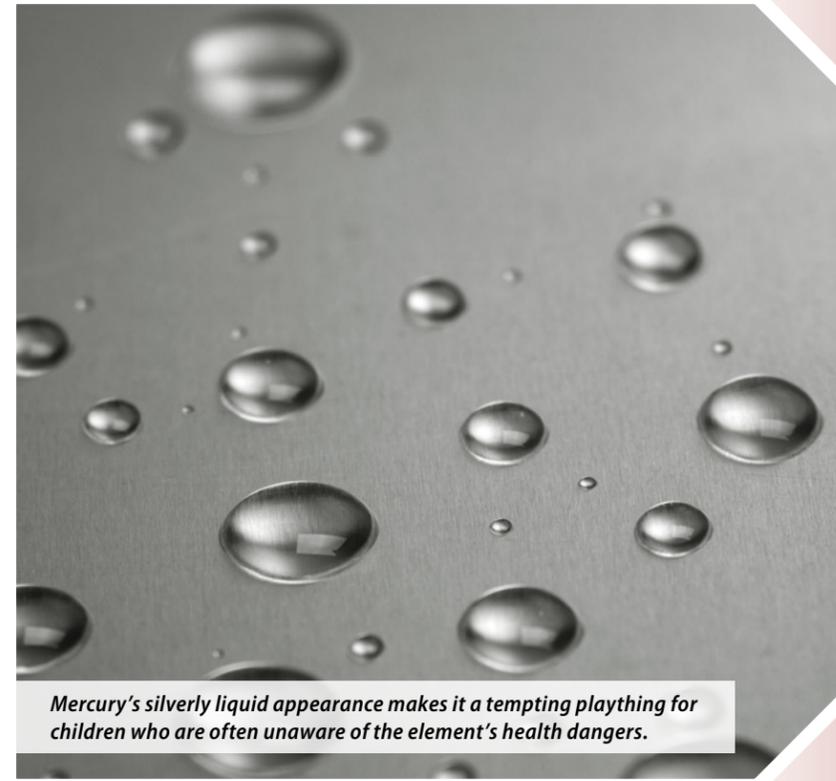
Environmental Health and Toxic Substances

CDC protects people from environmental hazards in the air we breathe, the water we drink, the food we eat, and the world that surrounds us. We investigate the relationship between environmental factors and health, conduct scientific investigations, develop guidance, and build partnerships to support healthy decision making. In the laboratory and the field, CDC's world-class scientists investigate the effects of the environment on health. We track and evaluate related health problems, and we help U.S. and international organizations respond to natural, technological, and terrorism-related environmental emergencies. Our vision is healthy people in a healthy environment.



Key Accomplishments 2015

- Documented that restaurants with certified kitchen managers in kitchens are less likely to have foodborne disease outbreaks than restaurants without them. Findings influenced FDA to revise certification recommendations in the model Food Code. Now, nearly 30 states and District of Columbia require restaurants and other permitted institutions to have these staff.
- Recorded an average 49% decrease in trans-fatty acid levels in all racial and ethnic groups in the U.S. population between 1999 and 2009 and 2009 and 2010, showing progress toward heart-healthy diets.
- Investigated sicknesses and deaths associated with the use of "fake marijuana." During January to May 2015, U.S. poison centers received more than 3,500 calls related to fake marijuana use, up 3 times from the same period the previous year. CDC published information and provided technical assistance to states dealing with the outbreak.
- Worked with state grantees to assess exposures from unregulated drinking water sources and implement treatment actions to protect more than 610,000 private well users.
- Measured more than 300 chemicals and nutritional indicators in the U.S. population through the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey and in studies that assessed environmental exposures or nutrition status.



Mercury's silvery liquid appearance makes it a tempting plaything for children who are often unaware of the element's health dangers.

"Don't Mess with Mercury" Initiative Protects Kids from Heavy Metal

Middle school students can come across mercury in thermometers, thermostats, electrical switches, and science labs. Mercury's silvery liquid appearance makes it tempting for children to play with—but it is poisonous! Breathing mercury vapors can affect the nervous system, damage the kidneys, and harm other parts of the body. In some cases, schools closed for months to remove mercury contamination. Cleanup costs for large mercury spills in schools have ranged from \$100,000 to over \$1 million.

The "Don't Mess with Mercury" initiative is giving kids, their parents, and their teachers the information they need to stay safe. The key messages of the initiative are:

- *Don't Mess With Mercury. If you see mercury don't play with it. Don't touch it. Find an adult.*
- *Mercury looks cool, but it's not! It is poisonous. It can make you sick.*

The Initiative includes educational materials to teach school children about mercury. Those materials include a 30-second animated public service announcement, an informative video game, an interactive model of the human body that demonstrates the harmful effects of mercury poisoning, and materials for teachers.



50%
Every year, more than 1 in 6 U.S. residents gets a foodborne illness. More than 50% of all U.S. foodborne illness outbreaks are associated with restaurants.



25%
Environmental factors contribute to more than 25% of all diseases worldwide, including cancer, asthma, and heart disease.



40,000
About 40,000 people have enrolled in the Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS) Registry and completed an ALS risk factor survey that will greatly increase our knowledge of this crippling disease.



50
CDC's Newborn Screening Quality Assurance Program ensures accurate detection of more than 50 disorders in newborn babies.