

COLLECTION LOCATION GUIDELINES

For California Mercury Thermostat Collection Locations

July 2025

ThermostatCare

COLLECTION LOCATION GUIDELINE REVIEW

Staff should **read and familiarize themselves with these guidelines prior to handling mercury thermostats**. After reading these guidelines, please sign below. By signing, I confirm that I have reviewed the guidelines effective of the date and I understand the program's operation and requirements.

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CONTENTS

ABOUT THERMOSTAT CARE	4
PROGRAM OVERVIEW	5
HOW COLLECTION WORKS.....	6
HOW TO DISTINGUISH A MERCURY THERMOSTAT	7
COLLECTION CONTAINER OPTIONS	9
STEPS TO COLLECTING MERCURY THERMOSTATS	10
IN-STORE EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS AVAILABLE	12
WHAT TO EXPECT	13
HOW TO STORE YOUR COLLECTION CONTAINER SAFELY	14
HOW TO PROPERLY SEND BACK YOUR CONTAINER	15
HOW TO FILL OUT AN INCENTIVE FORM	16
UNIVERSAL WASTE REGULATION TRAINING.....	18

ABOUT THERMOSTAT CARE

Thermostat Care is a stewardship program that was tasked by the California Department of Toxic Substances Control to safely dispose of mercury-containing thermostats to protect human and environmental health in the state. Our goal is to form partnerships across the state of California to remove mercury thermostats from circulation, send them to a safe containment facility, and to also educate the public on how to prevent contamination.

Prior to 2022, Thermostat Recycling Corporation (also known as TRC) managed the program. In 2022, following updated legislation (AB 707), the program came under the management of a qualified third party, PCA Product Stewardship Inc., and launched under the name Thermostat Care.

While the program has gone through some changes in recent years (including new branding and name), for the most part the program remains the same. Collection locations should not be affected by these changes and should see minimal operational changes.

Please direct all questions to Info@ThermostatCare.org.

If you need a new container, please email a completed [Bin or Pail Order Form](#) (thermostatcare.org/retailer-wholesaler) to ContainerRequests@ThermostatCare.org.

Note: These guidelines do not supersede any regulations or law. Collection locations need to follow all applicable local, state and federal regulations and laws.

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Thank you for participating in the Thermostat Care program and helping keep your community safe from toxic mercury. You're receiving these guidelines because you agreed to be a collection location. It's important that your staff reviews this information and follows the requested expectations to ensure safe collection of mercury thermostats in your community.

On January 1, 2006, the State of California banned the sale of new mercury-containing thermostats due to public health and safety concerns. California's Mercury Thermostat Collection Act of 2008 required manufacturers to establish a collection, transportation, and disposal program for out-of-service mercury-containing thermostats.

Assembly Bill No. 707 (AB 707) recast this as the Mercury Thermostat Collection Act of 2021. This required each manufacturer of mercury thermostats or group of manufacturers to on or before March 1, 2022, contract with a qualified third party to develop and implement a convenient, cost-effective, and efficient program for the collection, transportation, and disposal of mercury thermostats, including public education and outreach. The Mercury Thermostat Collection Act of 2021 aims to ensure that everyone who comes into contact with mercury thermostats understands the risks of mercury thermostats, how to dispose of mercury thermostats properly, and about the \$30 incentive to properly dispose of mercury thermostats.

Any business or facility that would like to participate - whether it be a retailer, contractor, household hazardous waste program, or any other organization - can request a free container. Thermostat Care covers the shipping costs to receive the container as well as the shipping costs to send it back. Mail-in rebate forms will also be provided. Consumers can use these to receive \$30 per mercury thermostat dropped off at a Thermostat Care collection location.

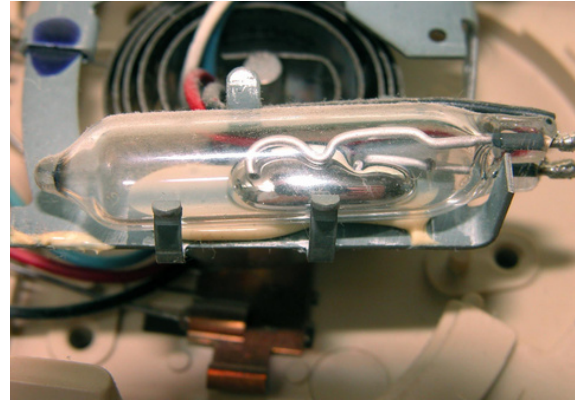
How Collection Works:

1. The collection location orders a container (bin or pail) from Thermostat Care.
 - a. If locations need an additional container, they can let us know by emailing Info@ThermostatCare.org.
2. The collection container(s) is sent to the location, free of charge.
3. Program participants drop off mercury thermostat(s) at the collection location.
4. The collection location safely puts the mercury thermostat(s) in a plastic bag supplied by Thermostat Care and places it into their Thermostat Care collection container.
5. Staff member at the collection location offers residents and service technicians (not licensed contractors) the opportunity to complete the \$30 per mercury thermostat incentive form.
 - a. The completed rebate form should be placed in the same plastic bag as the participant's mercury thermostat(s) to keep their items together for processing.
6. Once the container is full, or within 6 months of receiving a mercury thermostat (whichever comes first), schedule a FedEx Ground pickup to return the container to Thermostat Care free of charge.
 - a. See “Steps to Collecting Mercury Thermostat” section below for more details on this process.
7. Mercury thermostat(s) in the container get processed at a disposal facility
8. Incentive payment gets sent via mail to eligible rebate participants.

To access more information about Thermostat Care, visit our website (thermostatcare.org) or contact us via email (Info@ThermostatCare.org)

HOW TO DISTINGUISH A MERCURY THERMOSTAT

Thermostat Care will only accept **mercury thermostats**, which are a type of universal waste. According to DTSC, “Universal wastes are hazardous wastes that were determined to pose a lower immediate risk to people and the environment compared to other hazardous wastes. These universal wastes are widely produced by households and many different types of businesses”.



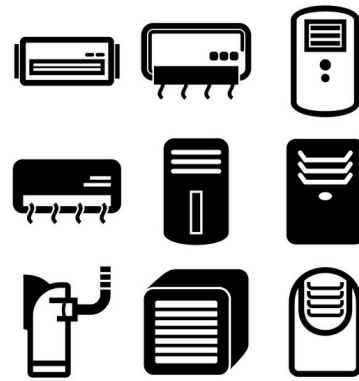
According to DTSC, a mercury-added thermostat is a product or device that uses a mercury switch to sense and control room temperature through communication with heating, ventilating, or air-conditioning equipment. As it moves within the glass switch (see above), the mercury opens and closes an electrical circuit, which turns on and off a furnace or air conditioner to maintain a desired room temperature.

Mercury thermostats operate by using a manual dial or knob to control the temperature. Therefore, any digital thermostats (even older ones) do not contain mercury. Mercury thermostats were banned from being manufactured or sold in 2006. Most likely, any thermostats purchased 2006 or later do not contain mercury.

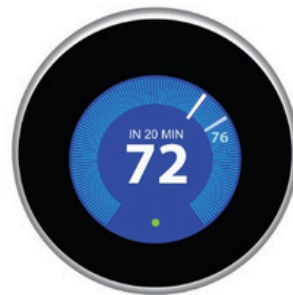
Below are some visual examples of mercury thermostats:



Thermostat Care will accept wall-mounted mercury thermostats, which means it was affixed to the wall. This does not include portable heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) units, which are often placed on a window or elsewhere in a home (see right).



Digital thermostats (see below for examples) are also not accepted by Thermostat Care as they do not contain mercury. These have digital sensors to measure temperature in a room. Unlike manual (analog) thermostats, digital thermostats can be identified by the digital display for the settings and temperature. They're also programmable, allowing the user to program a schedule of when they want heating or air conditioning in the room, which often saves energy and money.



COLLECTION CONTAINER OPTIONS

ThermostatCare offers **two** different options for collection containers, a bin and pail. Locations can choose either size that works best for their collection frequency and space availability. They can also choose to order an additional pail for when their main bin or pail is being sent to the processing facility.

Option 1: Green Bin (Holds up to 33 thermostats)



Option 2: 1-Gallon White Pail (Holds up to 9 thermostats)



STEPS TO COLLECTING MERCURY THERMOSTATS



Step 1: Order a Container

Order a mercury thermostat collection bin or pail by emailing a completed form to ContainerRequests@ThermostatCare.org. Forms may be found at <https://thermostatcare.org/retailer-wholesaler/>.

What Happens Next?

The requested bin or pail will be sent to you at no charge. If you have any questions during this period, please contact Info@thermostatcare.org.



Step 2: Collect Thermostats

Once you've received your collection container, cut the zip tie and open the container to verify that all relevant materials are included. Make sure the container is placed in an area accessible to all employees but out of direct reach from customers.

Ensure that mercury thermostats are individually placed and sealed in the provided plastic bags. DO NOT remove the mercury ampule from the thermostat.

Steps to Collecting Mercury Thermostats

1. Ensure all residents and service technicians (not licensed contractors) are filling out a rebate form prior to handing off the mercury thermostat to participate in the \$30 per mercury thermostat mail-in rebate. If they complete an incentive form, place it inside a plastic bag with their mercury thermostat(s) to keep those items together for processing. Bags are provided with each container. Provide the yellow carbon-backed version of the rebate form to them as a copy or receipt.
2. When a mercury thermostat is dropped off in your container, record relevant information in the mercury collection log (included in our Universal Waste Regulation training booklet) which also comes with each new container sent to your location). This tracking log needs to be kept at your location and covers the collection records spanning three years. When it's the first time a mercury thermostat is collected for this current container, you must place the date it was dropped off on the accumulation date sticker provided – this is the start of your “accumulation period” for that container.



Step 3: Spread the Word

Start letting your customers know that they can safely dispose of old mercury thermostats at your location! You can also let them know that they can receive a \$30 mail-in rebate per mercury thermostat. We have developed educational materials that you can display in your store. They are available for download and print in English, Spanish, Chinese, Korean, Tagalog, and Vietnamese through thermostatcare.org/retailer-wholesaler/. If you'd like any of these materials mailed to you, contact us via info@thermostatcare.org. See the next section regarding what these materials look like.



Step 4: Schedule a Pickup

Once the container is full, or 6 months after receiving your first thermostat (whichever comes first), schedule a FedEx Ground pickup to return the container free of charge. Your container was shipped with the pre-paid label already inside. If you misplaced the label, contact Info@ThermostatCare.org for a replacement.

To schedule: Visit the FedEx website section to "Schedule a Ground Return Package Pickup" (fedex.com/grd/rpp/ShowRPP.do) or call FedEx customer service to schedule a pickup at 1 (800) 463-3339

- If calling, the call will be automated, then it will transfer to a customer service representative.
- Schedule the pickup with "FedEx Ground" and not "FedEx Express" (our labels are with "Ground").

When the FedEx carrier picks up your container, make sure you receive a shipping receipt from them, which will have information about the container contents. To follow Program expectations, you must keep a record at your location about the shipments for at least three years.

Once a pickup order is received by our processing partner (Veolia), a replacement container will automatically be sent back. If you have any questions about the arrival of your replacement container or would like to order a small pail to have on-hand for mercury thermostat collection while your container is being processed, please contact Info@ThermostatCare.org.

IN-STORE EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS AVAILABLE

Educational materials are available free of charge that you can display in your store (available in various languages). They are available for download and print through thermostatcare.org/retailer-wholesaler/. If you'd like these materials mailed to you free of charge, contact us via info@thermostatcare.org. We currently have materials available in English, Spanish, Chinese, Korean, Vietnamese, Tagalog, Russian, Armenian, and Hebrew. If there are any additional languages that would better support your community's language needs, you're welcome to let us know.

Shelf talker material:

Placed on the shelf where thermostats are sold to communicate to your customers that they can bring their old mercury thermostat to this location.

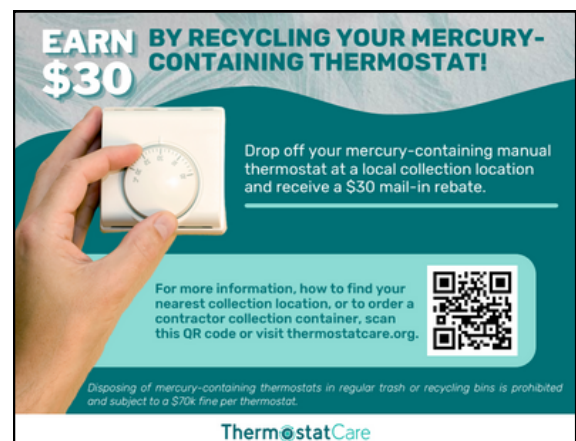


Window cling material:

Sticks to the window at the front of your store to communicate to current and future purchasers of a new thermostat about the free disposal service for mercury thermostats and relevant rebate.

Delivery Insert:

A promotional card that is placed in the packaging of relevant phone and/or online orders. Can also be handed out directly to customers.



WHAT TO EXPECT

Ensure staff is aware of the items/supplies that should arrive in your bin or pail when it is delivered. In the event that an item is missing, please reach out to Info@ThermostatCare.org.

Items/supplies Included in Your Collection Container:

- 1 [Storage and Shipping Requirements Infosheet](#)
- 2 FedEx Ground return shipping label and plastic sticky envelope
- 3 One plastic bag for lining the collection container
- 4 Four zip ties to seal the liner and container.
- 5 Accumulation Start Date Sticker - Immediately after receiving the container, please affix this sticker to the outside. When you receive a mercury thermostat, write the date on this sticker to help keep track of when to return:



**Universal Waste --
Mercury-Containing Equipment**

Accumulation Start Date:
Date first mercury thermostat placed in container

/ /

MM/DD/YY

Misplaced your return shipping label? Questions? Contact
Thermostat Care by emailing Info@ThermostatCare.org

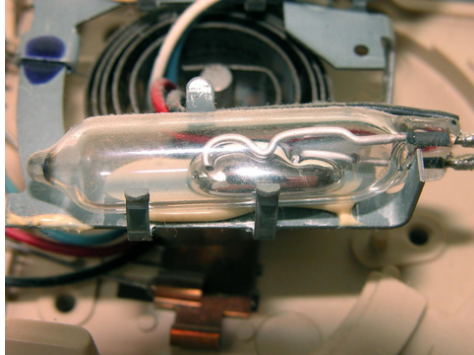
- 6 Universal Waste Regulation Training / Overview
- 7 Plastic bags (to place individual mercury thermostats)
- 8 Printed incentive forms
- 9 Collection Location Guidelines

HOW TO STORE YOUR COLLECTION CONTAINER SAFELY

Ensure your staff is being safe when handling mercury thermostats by sharing the following steps for proper container maintenance.

1

Do not accept loose mercury bulbs (see below), liquid mercury, or leaking thermostats.



2

Only accept wall-mount mercury switch thermostats.

3

Line the container with the provided plastic liner before placing any mercury thermostats into the container.

4

Affix the provided accumulation start date sticker to the outside of the container and write the date you first received a mercury thermostat on the label.

5

Ship the container within six months of your accumulation start date (the date you first received a mercury thermostat), regardless of whether it is full or not (as long as there is at least 1 mercury thermostat in the container). Ensure the liner is sealed with the tie wraps before shipping.



NOTE: Do NOT allow public access to the collection area without supervision. The collection container is not intended for self-drop-off. Do not let customers leave items or place items directly in the collection container without reviewing them with your staff first.

The collection container should be placed in an area that is easy to access for staff only and on relatively flat, solid ground to prevent accidentally dropping the container.

HOW TO PROPERLY SEND BACK YOUR CONTAINER

Ensure your staff is being safe when handling the return of the mercury thermostat-filled container. Doing so also ensures the safety of our staff members receiving the containers.

- 1 Fold the plastic bag liner closed and seal the bag with the provided bag tie to prepare for shipment.
- 2 Close the container and ensure the container "jaws" overlap properly for a tight close.
- 3 Place tie wraps through the holes on each end of the container to ensure it stays closed during shipping.
- 4 Fill out the shipping label with your business name and address.
- 5 Place the shipping label inside of the pouch, seal it, and apply the sticky side of the pouch directly on the outside of your container.
- 6 Contact FedEx Ground for pickup. To schedule: Visit the FedEx website section to "Schedule a Ground Return Package Pickup" (fedex.com/grd/rpp/ShowRPP.do) or call FedEx customer service to schedule a pickup at 1 (800) 463-3339
 - If calling, the call will be automated, then it will transfer to a customer service representative.
 - Schedule the pickup with "FedEx Ground" and not "FedEx Express" (our labels are with "Ground").



NOTE:

Never overfill the collection container. Your lid should sit flat on top. If the lid does not sit flat, please email us at Info@ThermostatCare.org to immediately receive a second container. All containers are FREE and partners may request as many as they deem necessary.

HOW TO FILL OUT AN INCENTIVE FORM

There is an incentive available for California residents and service technicians (not licensed contractors) to receive a \$30 mail-in rebate per mercury thermostat brought to a Thermostat Care collection location. The \$30 amount was introduced with the Mercury Thermostat Collection Act of 2021, which was an increase from the prior \$5 iteration. *Note: Only wall-mounted mercury-containing thermostats qualify for the incentive. See the “HOW TO DISTINGUISH A MERCURY THERMOSTAT” section for more information.*

Although your employees won't need to fill out an incentive form, they should be aware of how to do so in case a customer requires assistance or has any questions.

Incentive form copies should be provided to the rebate participant (incentive forms are carbon-backed to assist with this). If they bring a print-out of the form from our website, tell them to take a photo of their completed form for their records. Place their completed form in the sealed plastic bag containing their thermostat(s). Without this incentive form, we will not be able to mail the \$30 rebate per mercury thermostat to eligible participants.

All collection locations have been sent incentive forms and bags. Help your customers who are residents and service technicians (not licensed contractors) receive their \$30 per mercury thermostat by training your staff to:

1. **Mention the incentive at drop-off,**
2. **Assist with completing the form, and**
3. **Ensure the form is sealed in the same bag as the mercury thermostat(s).**

Forms should never be left loose in the container or forgotten.

See below for the incentive form and information about the responses.



TC ADMINISTRATIVE USE ONLY	
HQ T-STAT COUNT	
INELIGIBLE T-STAT COUNT	
OTHER PRODUCT (Y/N)	
BIN OR PAIL NUMBER	

CALIFORNIA CONSUMER \$30 INCENTIVE FORM

Form must be completed clearly and in its entirety.

Only intact mercury thermostats are eligible. Mercury thermostats must be sealed in a plastic bag with completed form and dropped off at a participating collection location. TC will send a check to consumer after processing the mercury thermostats.

Date: ____/____/____

Collection Location: _____ Street Address: _____

City: _____ State: **CA** Zip: _____ Phone Number: _____

Consumer Name (Payable To): _____

Mailing Address: _____
(For Payment)

City: _____ State: **CA** Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Physical Address: _____
(where mercury thermostat was removed)

Count of Mercury Thermostats Returned: _____ x \$ 30.00 = \$ _____
(5 thermostats maximum per bag, per form. Thermostats will be counted and checked to verify each contains mercury.) Estimate Due to Consumer

"I certify that the mercury thermostats returned for recycling were removed from the place of residence stated above during the course of maintenance or repair in California."

Signature of Payee _____ Name (Please Print) _____ Date _____

Payment is contingent upon TC's receipt of TC recycling bin from collection location.
By law, collection locations are required to return bin once a year for processing.

Retain COPY of this form for your records.

To Contact TC: www.thermostatcare.org | 888-266-0550 | trc@thermostat-recycle.org

TC CA Consumer \$30 Incentive Form: Rev.7/20/22

Leave this top right section blank, to be filled out by Thermostat Care team

Date: *Today's Date*

Collection Location: *Name of your business*
Address/City/ZIP/Phone: *Contact info for your business*

Consumer Name/Address/Phone: *Participant's information*

Physical Address: *address of where thermostat was removed from*

Count of Mercury Thermostats: *Number of mercury thermostats which the customer is submitting.*
Multiply by \$30 to calculate the amount due to each participant.

Name/Signature of Payee: *Signature and printed name of the participant submitting the thermostat.*

UNIVERSAL WASTE REGULATION TRAINING

A Universal Waste Regulations training material is included in each collection container, but can also be found on the Thermostat Care website at <https://thermostatcare.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/UWR-Training-Presentation-Retailer-and-Wholesaler.pdf>

Thank you for your time reviewing these guidelines and your participation in the Thermostat Care program to support the health of your community.

Questions? Email Info@ThermostatCare.org or visit our website ThermostatCare.org