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Pennsylvania Mercury Thermostat Law Goes Into Effect December 8

The Recycling of Mercury Thermostats is Now Mandatory in Pennsylvania

November 12, 2009—A Pennsylvania law designed to increase the collection and recycling of waste mercury thermostats goes into effect December 8, 2009. The Mercury-Free Thermostat Act of 2008 (HB 44) requires all HVAC wholesalers to act as a collection point for waste mercury thermostats. The law also mandates that contractors and thermostat retailers either participate in a manufacturer supported collection program or provide notice to customers that recycling of mercury thermostats is required under Pennsylvania law and identify locations of nearby collection points. The Pennsylvania law follows similar legislation in California, Iowa, Maine, New Hampshire, and Vermont.

Mercury is a toxic metal that in its various forms can accumulate in living tissue and cause adverse health effects. When a mercury thermostat is broken and disposed of in a solid waste landfill or incinerator, the mercury can contaminate the air, surface water, and ground water.

Under the law, manufacturers must collect and recycle waste mercury thermostats at no cost to contractors and homeowners.

The Thermostat Recycling Corporation (TRC) is providing collection containers to HVAC wholesalers for a nominal one-time fee. TRC absorbs all subsequent costs to ship and recycle waste mercury thermostats.

“TRC wants contractors to know that it’s easy, convenient, and most importantly free for them to properly dispose of mercury thermostats,” said Mark Tibbetts, TRC’s **executive director**. “To comply with the law, all HVAC contractors need to do is to hang onto the mercury thermostats they remove from service and drop them off for recycling at their local HVAC supply house.”

TRC is a not-for-profit corporation founded in 1997 by thermostat manufacturers to collect and properly dispose of mercury thermostats removed from service. TRC provides HVAC contractors and consumers with a no-cost solution for properly disposing of mercury-switch thermostats. Nationally, TRC has more than 3,000 collection containers in 48 states. TRC currently represents nearly 30 manufacturers that branded and distributed mercury-switch thermostats in the United States.

For more information about the TRC program, contact Executive Director Mark Tibbetts at (703) 841-3246 or Mark_Tibbetts@nema.org. **More information also available on our website at: www.thermosat-recycle.org.**