

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

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### Mercury Now Accepted at Columbia County's Household Hazardous Waste Collection Events

Columbia County residents and businesses may dispose of their mercury-containing waste free of charge at the monthly Household Hazardous Waste Collection Event. The HHW Event is Saturday, February 28th from 8 a.m. to 12 noon at the Columbia County Transfer Station, located at 1601 Railroad Ave. in St. Helens.

Elemental mercury and mercury-containing waste including thermostats, thermometers, medical equipment, silent light switches, and mercury compounds will be accepted.

"Mercury is a naturally occurring element, but is highly toxic and resists decomposition in the environment," said Leslie Kochan of the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) Solid Waste Program. "Mercury accumulates in the food chain, can damage the brain, kidneys and lungs and can permanently affect fetal and child development."

DEQ and Columbia County Land Development Services have partnered to

reduce accidental mercury exposures by providing free mercury collection and disposal for residents and small businesses including medical and dental offices, clinics, laboratories, schools, auto wreckers and dairies.

DEQ funds mercury collection statewide through landfill disposal fees.

For more information about the DEQ Household Hazardous Waste Program, please visit the DEQ Web site at <http://www.deq.state.or.us/lq/mercurycollection.htm>

Columbia County's HHW services are maintained through transfer station collection fees.

Small businesses in Columbia County can get help with hazardous waste disposal too. If you own or work for a small business and would like more information, call 503.397.7213

Accepted HHW items include: oil based paints and stains, thinners and solvents, pool and spa chemicals, pesticides, herbicides, fertilizers and poisons, motor oil, antifreeze and other automotive fluids, household cleaners and disinfectants, batteries, art and hobby chemicals, aerosol spray products, propane tanks or bottles from barbecue grills, fluorescent lamps and ballasts, items containing mercury, medical sharps, and small arms ammunition. No containers larger than five gallons please.

Standard household garbage is not accepted at HHW events. At this time, the Transfer Station does not accept radioactive material at HHW collection events or during regular operations.

Recycle. Electronic waste (i.e. television, monitors, cell phones, etc.), antifreeze, used motor oil and automotive batteries as well as glass, cardboard, plastics, and metals can be recycled at the transfer station anytime.