

# **Sutter Health's Policy For Mercury-Free Purchasing**

## **I. POLICY**

As part of the ongoing efforts to ensure a safe environment for patients, staff and visitors \_\_\_\_\_ will at a minimum limit and to the extent possible avoid the purchase of equipment or materials that contain mercury.

## **II. PURPOSE**

To provide guidelines for purchasing activities to minimize mercury sources in the hospital environment. In complying with this policy hospital purchasing will request that suppliers specify the amount of mercury contained in any products to be purchased and indicate the feasibility of mercury free alternatives.

## **III. GUIDELINES**

### **A. Responsibilities**

#### 1. Purchasing Department

In an effort to minimize mercury hazards, personnel involved in purchasing decisions shall adhere to the guidelines set forth in this policy when making purchasing decisions. The Purchasing department will participate in establishing goals to reduce mercury containing equipment and materials in the facility.

#### 2. Hazardous Materials Coordinator

The Hazardous Materials Coordinator will provide purchasing agents with the necessary support regarding mercury hazards and product evaluation. New equipment or material containing mercury or mercury compounds shall be reviewed by Hazardous Material Coordinator prior to purchase.

#### 3. Department Managers/End Users

The individuals in the various departments including central services, clinical staff, facilities and other departments must work with purchasing and the Hazardous Materials Coordinator to evaluate the feasibility of mercury alternatives in application.

### **B. Purchasing Guidelines**

#### 1. Establish a mercury free policy with vendors.

Whenever possible the use of equipment and hazardous materials containing mercury should be minimized and/or eliminated. Products that contain mercury should be avoided whenever feasible as long as mercury free alternatives exist and will not compromise patient care. Vendors should be contacted and provide information regarding \_\_\_\_\_ mercury-free position.

#### 2. Select those vendors who are willing to meet mercury free goals

\_\_\_\_\_ will develop a preferred list of vendors based on those who are willing to provide mercury free product alternatives. In the proposal process, purchasing agents shall request information relating to mercury content in equipment. Purchasing should incorporate a mercury disclosure requirement into the standard purchase agreement. The

disclosure should require the supplier to specify the amount of mercury contained in products to be purchased and provide alternatives if available.

3. Ensure mercury product hazards are evaluated prior to purchase.

Where alternatives are not feasible, the hazards associated with equipment or materials containing mercury should be evaluated prior to purchase. This should be conducted in conjunction with Sutter environmental health and safety personnel and the internal customers who have the application knowledge. Any new chemical or hazardous product brought into the healthcare environment should be evaluated in this context.

4. Identify mercury reduction goals through purchasing efforts.

A Mercury Assessment will be conducted to evaluate equipment and materials that use or contain mercury. Based on the results of the Mercury Assessment, goals will be established to reduce mercury containing equipment and materials in the hospital environment.

Periodically Purchasing will evaluate and modify the purchasing process based on the results and efforts made to reduce the presence of mercury at \_\_\_\_\_.