

Mercury in Compact Fluorescent Light Bulbs (CFLs)

Are they really worth the extra money?

Compared with regular incandescent light bulbs CFLs offer many benefits.

- Save energy - Use 1/3 of the energy of a standard incandescent light
- Convenient - Last up to 10 times longer
- Save an average of \$30 or more in energy costs over its lifetime
- Prevent 450 pounds of greenhouse gas emissions over its lifetime
- CFLs produce 70% less heat and can help cut energy costs from home cooling.



Is it true that CFLs contain mercury?

Yes, mercury is an essential and irreplaceable element for most energy-efficient light bulbs, including CFLs. The health risks associated with mercury exposure have led manufacturers to reduce the amount of mercury used in fluorescent lighting products. CFLs contain a very small amount of mercury sealed within the glass tubing, roughly enough to cover the tip of a ball point pen (5mg).

Are there any special precautions for use of CFLs at home?

CFLs are safe to use in your home. No mercury is released when the bulbs are in use. Always screw and unscrew the bulb at its base and never forcefully twist a CFL into a light socket by its glass tubes.

What do I do with a CFL once it burns out?

CFLs for your home are not considered hazardous waste, according to federal and state rules. Still, CFLs should not be tossed in the regular garbage if preferred options exist, such as recycling centers or Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) facilities. Please check with your local recycling center or HHW facility for disposal options. If your local recycling center or HHW facility does not accept CFLs and regular trash is your only option, seal the used CFL in two plastic bags and place it in the regular trash.

What if I break a CFL in my home?

EPA recommends the following clean-up and disposal guidelines:

1. Open windows to ventilate the room and restrict access for 15 minutes before cleaning up.
2. Wear disposable rubber gloves.
3. Sweep up the materials with a whisk broom and dust pan, do not use a vacuum.
4. Wipe the area clean with a damp paper towel.
5. Place all CFL parts and cleanup materials into two sealed plastic bags.
6. Wash your hands after disposing of the bags.

Get Caught !



<http://www.kdheks.gov/bar>
<http://kdheks.gov/waste>
<http://www.energystar.gov>

