

Thermostat Recycling: A Mail-Back Program



The Thermostat Recycling Corporation (TRC) is a product stewardship organization that was established by the manufacturers of thermostats. Older thermostats contain mercury, which we now know is a potent neurotoxin. While manufacturers have phased out the production of mercury thermostats there are still tens of millions on the walls of peoples homes and businesses. When they are replaced it is important that these older thermostats are disposed of carefully. TRC has established a voluntary program that is open to all contractors and waste collection facilities who can sign-up through TRC's website.



*Thermostat
Recycling
Corporation*



Approximately 75% of thermostats are replaced by professional technicians. All technicians have the opportunity to return old thermostats to TRC if they sign up to host a bin themselves or they can return them to the wholesaler.

Any retailer, contractor, HVAC wholesale distributor, or household hazardous waste collection site can sign up to receive a bin from TRC. Once the bin is filled it can be mailed back to TRC who pays for all shipping costs. (There is a one-time fee of \$25)

When TRC receives the bins they send them to a responsible waste management facility. TRC also sends a new bin for free to the contractor or wholesaler so they can continue collecting.

At a hazardous waste management facility the mercury ampoules are broken down and the mercury is stored safely.

There are an estimated 10 million thermostats replaced every year – fewer than 5% of those are currently being handled safely.

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