

Mercury-containing Lamp Stewardship

LightRecycle Washington

LightRecycle Washington is a highly successful product stewardship program for recycling lamps that contain mercury, such as compact fluorescent lamps (CFLs), fluorescent tubes and high intensity discharge lamps (HIDs).

Program Description

LightRecycle allows individuals and businesses to drop off up to 10 mercury-containing lights per day for recycling at no charge.

- LightRecycle Washington has a network of over 250 registered collection sites across Washington State. A collection site finder is available at their website: LightRecycle.org
- The program is financed by an Environmental Handling Charge (EHC) that is applied to mercury-containing lights sold at retail in Washington State.
- LightRecycle is administered by a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. State law requires light manufacturers to finance the program by remitting the EHC to the LightRecycle product stewardship organization, PCA Product Stewardship Inc.
- LightRecycle uses the collected EHC to fund the statewide recycling program and perform education and outreach.



Why Recycle?

- Disposing of mercury-containing lights in regular garbage can cause the mercury to be released into the environment if they break.
- Mercury is a toxic heavy metal and potent neurotoxin. Mercury can be particularly harmful to children, infants and fetuses by impairing neurological development.

Program Successes: Over 4 million lamps have been recycled since LightRecycle Washington began operating in January 2015, exceeding annual collection targets set by the Department of Ecology.

Program Challenges: CFL sales, which provide funding to the program, have declined dramatically since 2015 as sales of LED lights have grown. This has required LightRecycle to increase the EHC from \$0.50 to \$0.95 per mercury-containing light. The increase was approved by the Dept. of Ecology and went into effect February 1, 2018.

