

Amalgam Waste Best Management Practices

Dental best management practices for amalgam waste handling and disposal⁴ include use of chair-side traps, use of amalgam separators, regular inspection and cleaning of traps, and use of appropriate commercial waste service to recycle and/or dispose of collected amalgam (Table). Compliance with the EPA final rule on amalgam separators is required.

Table. Best Management Practices for Amalgam Waste⁴

Do	Don't
<i>Do</i> use precapsulated alloys and stock a variety of capsule sizes	<i>Don't</i> use bulk mercury
<i>Do</i> recycle used disposable amalgam capsules	<i>Don't</i> put used disposable amalgam capsules in biohazard containers
<i>Do</i> salvage, store, and recycle non-contact (scrap) amalgam	<i>Don't</i> put non-contact amalgam waste in biohazard containers, infectious waste containers (red bags), or regular garbage
<i>Do</i> salvage (contact) amalgam pieces from restorations after removal and recycle their contents	<i>Don't</i> put contact amalgam waste in biohazard containers, infectious waste containers (red bags), or regular garbage
<i>Do</i> use chair-side traps, vacuum pump filters, and amalgam separators to retain amalgam and recycle their contents	<i>Don't</i> rinse devices containing amalgam over drains or sinks
<i>Do</i> recycle teeth that contain amalgam restorations (Note: Ask your recycler whether extracted teeth with amalgam restorations require disinfection)	<i>Don't</i> dispose of extracted teeth that contain amalgam restorations in biohazard containers, infectious waste containers (red bags), sharps containers, or regular garbage
<i>Do</i> manage amalgam waste through recycling as much as possible	<i>Don't</i> flush amalgam waste down the drain or toilet
<i>Do</i> use line cleaners that minimize dissolution of amalgam	<i>Don't</i> use bleach or chlorine-containing cleaners to flush wastewater lines