

# **WASTEWATER DEPARTMENT**

## **Mercury Minimization Program in Implementation Phase**

As part of the City of North Royalton Consolidated Sewer District's National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Permit (*NPDES*), we are required to meet the conditions of numerous pollutant issues which among them are mercury. To accomplish this, the Wastewater Department is implementing a mercury pollutant minimization program to make reasonable progress towards attaining water quality limits related to this toxic pollutant.

It is extremely costly to remove mercury from the raw sewage influent at a wastewater treatment plant. Costs range from \$10,000,000 to \$100,000,000 to remove one pound of mercury. We have chosen to reduce mercury by minimizing its use in the community; therefore, reducing the amount that potentially would be discharged into the sanitary sewers and eventually end up in our streams, rivers and lakes.

Assessing the sources of mercury within any community is a valuable tool, which we have already begun to evaluate and implement.

Typical facilities where mercury is found:

- Hospitals
- Dental offices - surveys completed in 2010; inspections/discussions to begin this month.
- Wastewater Treatment Works - self-assessment performed at both plants, reduction activities in progress.
- Education/Research facilities - schools/laboratories, industrial sites.
- Automobile recycling.
- Households

Additional information will be forthcoming as our program progresses. Education about the danger of mercury will be highlighted. "Don't Mess With Mercury" was an article recently written in a previous newsletter and is located on the Wastewater Department tab within the City Of North Royalton's website.