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## **Clean-Up Nearly Complete Following Mercury Spill at MSD Treatment Plants** *Public Not at Risk from Spill*

Cincinnati, OH – The Metropolitan Sewer District of Greater Cincinnati has been working throughout the week with local partners to safely collect, remove and dispose of mercury that spilled from equipment on June 22nd. The Public is not at risk from the spill and about 90 percent of the identified areas of concern have been cleaned including the driveway areas at both plants and areas within facility buildings.

The source of the mercury originated from 10 air flow monitors. The monitors were transported from MSD's Little Miami Treatment Plant to the Mill Creek Treatment Plant off of Gest Street. Mercury did spill from the flow meters during the loading and unloading process at both plants. MSD has been working with representatives from the EPA as well as city and county health departments to safely collect remove and dispose of the mercury.

"The health and safety of the public and our employees is our priority and MSD will continue to work with the EPA and other local agencies to ensure proper procedures are followed," said MSD's Executive Director Tony Parrott.

"Hamilton County Public Health has been involved in assessing potential exposure to mercury, particularly along the route from the MSD facility to Rumpke in Colerain Township, and at the Rumpke waste facility," according to Greg Kesterman, Assistant Health Commissioner, Hamilton County Public Health. "We worked closely with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. After considerable testing, it has been determined that there are no elevated mercury levels along the route and in Colerain Township and as such, there is no threat to residents in the Township,"

Elevated levels of mercury vapors have not been detected in the breathing zone along the road leading from the Little Miami Treatment Plant to the Mill Creek location. Water quality samples taken from wastewater coming in and leaving MSD's treatment plants are within acceptable levels.

"One meter has been contained and removed from a storage room at our Little Miami Treatment Plant," said Parrott. "We are continuing our assessment. At this point in time we believe that the remaining nine meters are located at the Rumpke landfill. We are working with Rumpke to have them removed."

"The mercury containers in question have been deposited at the Rumpke landfill," Kesterman says. "We have isolated the area and are working with all parties to remove the containers and dispose of them properly to ensure there are no future issues."

Each flow meter is thought to contain approximately 4-to- 8 pounds of mercury. Mercury is a dense liquid metal.

Air flow meters are used to measure air flow during the aeration stage of the wastewater treatment process. During aeration compressed air is pumped into aeration basins where a diffuser system ensures the air is distributed evenly for optimum treatment.

Mercury exists in three forms that have different uses and toxicity: metallic, inorganic and organic. Metallic mercury, which was contained in the air flow meters, is also commonly found in thermometers, fluorescent light bulbs and some electrical switches.

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*Every day, the Metropolitan Sewer District of Greater Cincinnati (MSD) protects the public's health and the environment through professional water reclamation and watershed management. As we collect and treat more than 180 million gallons of sewage daily from 43 municipalities, villages, and townships in Greater Cincinnati through 3,000 miles of sanitary or combined sewers, MSD serves you with honesty, integrity, accountability, and respect.*