

**United States Environmental Protection Agency**  
**Region IV**  
**POLLUTION REPORT**

**Date:** Saturday, June 3, 2006

**From:** Chris Russell

**Subject:** Second Update

Oak Grove Elementary Mercury Spill  
3801 Wake Forest Hwy, Durham, NC  
Latitude: 35.9814000  
Longitude: -78.8208000

<b>POLREP No.:</b>	3	<b>Site #:</b>	A4LS
<b>Reporting Period:</b>		<b>D.O. #:</b>	
<b>Start Date:</b>	5/24/2006	<b>Response Authority:</b>	CERCLA
<b>Mob Date:</b>	5/24/2006	<b>Response Type:</b>	Emergency
<b>Demob Date:</b>		<b>NPL Status:</b>	Non NPL
<b>Completion Date:</b>		<b>Incident Category:</b>	Removal Action
<b>CERCLIS ID #:</b>		<b>Contract #</b>	
<b>RCRIS ID #:</b>			

#### Site Description

On the evening of May 23, 2006, a parent noticed elemental mercury on their child's clothes. In turn, the parent contacted the Poison Control Center for advice. The Poison Control Center then contacted the Durham County Public Health Department (DCPHD), which immediately started an investigation into the source of the mercury. DCPHD discovered that an individual had stolen approximately 10 pounds of elemental mercury and that this individual had taken the mercury to a Church service and dispersed it to four children. At least one of these children took the mercury to the Oak Grove Elementary School and proceeded to "spray" other kids, the school bus, etc. with the mercury. On May 24th, Ms. Luanne Williams, Toxicologist, NC State Health Dept. contacted EPA Region 4 and requested assistance with the investigation and cleanup of the mercury contamination. EPA assessed and monitored 27 separate locations (25 residences, 1 Church, 1 School). Of the 27 locations, 18 sites needed active removal actions (including the school and Church), ranging from the removal of contaminated clothes, to the removal of floors, walls, etc.

EPA worked in a Unified Command with the Durham County Emergency Management Agency, and the Durham County Public Health Department. Durham PD, Durham County Sheriff's Office, State of NC EMA, and the NC State Health Dept. also integrated into the established ICS structure.

#### Current Activities

EPA has assessed all 27 locations and have taken actions at 18 of the Sites. Oak Grove Elementary School and the Church have been cleaned and cleared for use. Currently, removal actions are still being taken at two residences.

EPA/R4 is working with the USACOE concerning the contaminated items removed and disposed of from the residences.

ERRS is working on T&D of the contaminated materials.

#### Planned Removal Actions

The majority of the removal actions have been undertaken at this time. Removal actions included: removing contaminated clothes, furniture, removing baseboards, floors, wall board, etc. Air monitoring results indicate that further removal actions may be limited.

#### Next Steps

Provide air monitoring sampling at the residences to help determine the need for further removal actions.

#### Key Issues

None at this time.

[response.epa.gov/oakgrove](http://response.epa.gov/oakgrove)

