


MEMORANDUM

City of Philadelphia  
Date: 5/19/09

TO: Shelly Smith, City Solicitor

FROM: Jeanne Reedy, Administrative Services Director, Records Dept. 

SUBJECT: Regulation Adopting the Dental Amalgam Brochure "Information Sheet – Amalgam Dental Fillings Containing Mercury"

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The above Regulation promulgated by the Department of Public Health was received in the Department of Records on 4/16/09 for filing and advertising.

Inasmuch as there was no requests for hearings, this Regulation became effective midnight 5/18/09.

CC: Donald F. Schwarz, MD, MPH  
Giridhar Mallya, MD, MSHP

Memorandum

City of Philadelphia

Date: 4/16/09

To: Donald F. Schwarz, MD, MPH

From: Jeanne Reedy, Administrative Services Director, Records Dept. *Jeanne Reedy*

Subject: Regulation Adopting the Dental Amalgam Brochure "Information Sheet – Amalgam Dental Fillings Containing Mercury"

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Cc: Giridhar Mallya, MD, MSHP

City of Philadelphia  
Law Department

## Memorandum

**TO:** Dr. Donald F. Schwarz, Health Commissioner

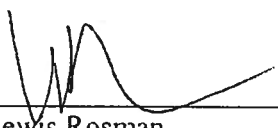
**FROM:** Lewis Rosman, Senior Attorney

**DATE:** March 23, 2009

**SUBJECT:** Regulation Adopting the Dental Amalgam Brochure

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I have reviewed the attached "Regulation Adopting The Dental Amalgam Brochure: Information Sheet – Amalgam Dental Fillings Containing Mercury" that was submitted today to the Law Department and find the Regulation to be legal and in proper form. I am advised the Regulation has been approved by the Board of Health. In accordance with Section 8-407(a) of The Philadelphia Home Rule Charter, you may forward these amendments to the Department of Records where they will be made available for public inspection.


  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Lewis Rosman  
Senior Attorney

Memorandum

City of Philadelphia

Date: 4/16/09

To: Toni Martinez, Advertising Supervisor

From: Jeanne Reedy, Administrative Services Director 

Subject: Regulation Adopting the Dental Amalgam Brochure "Information Sheet – Amalgam Dental Fillings Containing Mercury"

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The attached forms provide an exact copy of the subject for insertion in the three Philadelphia newspapers with the largest paid circulation as required under Section 8-497 of the Philadelphia Home Rule Charter.

We request that the insertion appear as soon as possible.

It will be necessary to inform the three newspapers to furnish us with a notarized original affidavit of proof of this publication within a week after it has been published.

Please acknowledge receipt of this advertisement by signing the enclosed copy of this memorandum and returning it to us.

Thank you.

Received In Procurement By:




Date: 04-16-2009

CITY OF PHILADELPHIA  
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH  
OFFICE OF THE HEALTH COMMISSIONER

MEMORANDUM

April 16, 2009

TO: Joan T. Decker, Records Commissioner

FROM: Donald F. Schwarz, MD, MPH 

SUBJECT: Proposed Department of Public Health Regulation

In accordance with Section 8-407(a) of the Philadelphia Home Rule Charter, I enclose herewith the public hearing documents regarding a proposed Department of Public Health regulation:

REGULATION ADOPTING THE  
DENTAL AMALGAM BROCHURE  
"INFORMATION SHEET – AMALGAM  
DENTAL FILLINGS CONTAINING MERCURY"

The proposed regulation adopts the attached brochure as the City's dental amalgam brochure pursuant to the requirements of Chapter 9-3100 of the Philadelphia Code, which include Council approval of the same brochure.

The following actions have been taken:

Approved by Board of Health	March 19, 2009
Approved by Law Department	March 23, 2009

I am requesting that the proposed regulation be made available for public inspection in accordance with the requirements of the City Charter. I have also attached the Law Department approval memorandum of the proposed regulation.

Thank you for your assistance with this request.

DFS/jp  
Attachments

cc: Giridhar Mallya, MD, MSHP

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**CITY OF PHILADELPHIA  
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH**

**REGULATION ADOPTING THE  
DENTAL AMALGAM BROCHURE  
“INFORMATION SHEET – AMALGAM  
DENTAL FILLINGS CONTAINING MERCURY”**

Section 1. The attached document entitled “Information Sheet – Amalgam dental fillings containing mercury” is hereby adopted as the City’s dental amalgam brochure pursuant to the requirements of Chapter 9-3100 of The Philadelphia Code.

Section 2. This regulation shall be effective, and shall be considered “adopted” pursuant to the terms of Chapter 9-3100 of The Philadelphia Code, upon the effective date of Council legislation approving the brochure adopted by this regulation.

Approved:

Board of Health  
Law Department  
Records Department

March 19, 2009  
March 23, 2009

# Draft from Board of Health, 2.23.09

## Information Sheet – Amalgam dental fillings containing mercury

The Philadelphia Department of Public Health has developed this information sheet pursuant to Section 1, Title 9, Chapter 9-3100 of the Philadelphia Code. Its purpose is to give you information about amalgam fillings that contain mercury and other dental filling options.

Your dentist's office should provide you with a copy of this sheet and answer any questions that you may have.

### 1. What is dental amalgam?

- Dental amalgam is the silver-colored material used to fill (restore) teeth that have cavities. It is one of several approved choices for filling cavities.
- Amalgam is made up of 50 percent mercury, a type of metal. Amalgam also contains other metals including silver, tin, copper, and zinc.

### 2. Is dental amalgam that contains mercury safe?

- There is ongoing research and discussion about the health effects of mercury in amalgam fillings.
- Small amounts of mercury are released as a vapor (gas) when amalgam fillings are placed or removed and through chewing. This mercury can be absorbed by the body and may build up over time.
- High levels of mercury can cause toxic effects on the brain, nervous system, and kidneys.
- Generally, people with amalgam fillings have higher levels of mercury in their blood and urine than people without amalgam fillings. The mercury levels in people with amalgam fillings are not high enough to be considered toxic.
- So far, well-done studies have shown that amalgam fillings do not impact behavior information processing, and kidney function among children.
- It is more difficult to study the long-term effects of dental amalgam (effects that may appear later in life). Research in this area is still being performed.
- The Food and Drug Administration (FDA), which regulates the safety of medications and medical devices, has stated that "dental amalgams contain mercury, which may have neurotoxic effects on the nervous systems of developing children and fetuses." The FDA is currently reviewing data and will make a decision about how strongly to regulate the use of amalgam.

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**3. Are there alternatives to amalgam?**

- Yes. Amalgam is one of several approved choices for filling cavities.
- The most common dental filling used today is resin composite, which does not contain mercury. Resin is usually tooth-colored.
- Other filling materials are a form of glass cement, porcelain, gold, and other metals.

**4. Aside from safety issues, what are the pros and cons of amalgam and alternatives?**

- Amalgam fillings generally last longer than resin composite fillings, so they don't need to be replaced as often.
- Resin composite fillings are tooth-colored and, therefore, are preferred by some people for cosmetic reasons.
- There may be a cost difference between resin composite and dental amalgam.
- To protect the environment, amalgam must be disposed of as a hazardous waste.

**5. What should you do?**

- Talk to your dentist, ask questions, and make an informed choice about dental fillings if you have a cavity.
- Prevent cavities through regular brushing, flossing, and dental exams.
- For more information on amalgam fillings that contain mercury:

*The U.S. Food and Drug Administration Questions and Answers on Dental Amalgam:*  
[www.fda.gov/cdrh/consumer/amalgams.html](http://www.fda.gov/cdrh/consumer/amalgams.html)

*Centers for Disease Control Dental Amalgam Use and Benefits Fact Sheet:*  
<http://www.cdc.gov/oralHealth/publications/factsheets/amalgam.htm>

**or call toll-free:**

*The U.S. Food and Drug Administration at*  
1-800-638-2041 (option #2) between 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m

**A copy of this information sheet has been provided to the patient (or patient's representative) and his/her questions, if any, have been answered.**

Patient signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Dentist signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

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