

A FACT SHEET FROM  
THE SOUTHDOLD TOWN  
DEPARTMENT OF SOLID WASTE

## CFL Facts

Install CFLs in hard-to-reach areas, such as hallways, closets, vaulted ceilings, etc. You won't have to climb a ladder again for years to come!



Most CFLs are rated for outdoor use, but read the package carefully to make sure.

CFLs can be used with timers, motion detectors, photocells and occupancy sensors. If you need to use a dimmer switch, look for a CFL designed specifically for dimming.



You can use CFLs to replace bulbs in many halogen lamps, which will save energy and greatly reduce the risk of fire.



## THE SOUTHDOLD TOWN DEPARTMENT OF SOLID WASTE

The Southold Town Transfer Station is located at:

6155 Cox Lane  
Cutchogue, NY 11935

Phone: 631-734-7685  
Or visit  
[www.southoldtown.northfork.net](http://www.southoldtown.northfork.net)

THIS BROCHURE WAS PRODUCED  
IN COOPERATION WITH THE  
BROOME COUNTY (NY) DIVISION  
OF SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT.

## Compact Fluorescent Bulb Disposal & Handling



631-734-7685

## Compact Fluorescent Bulbs

Compact fluorescent light (CFL) bulbs when compared to standard incandescent bulbs use 2/3 less energy and last up to 10 times longer. Replacing a 60 watt incandescent bulb with a 13 watt CFL can save at least \$30 in energy cost over the life of the bulb.

### Do CFLs contain mercury?

Yes, CFLs contain a small amount of mercury that is sealed within the glass tubing; an average of 5 milligrams (equivalent to the tip of a ball point pen). Mercury is an irreplaceable element in CFLs and is what allows it to be an efficient light source.



As a comparison an old thermostat could contain up to 3000 milligrams of mercury and a old thermometer could have up to 500 milligrams.

### Should I be concerned about using CFLs in my home?

CFLs are safe to use. Mercury is not released when bulbs are in use. CFLs are made of glass tubing that may break if dropped or mishandled. Caution should be exercised when removing the lamp from its packaging, installing it or replacing it. Remember, the next time you replace a bulb, to

put a drop cloth on the floor so that any accidental breakage can be easily cleaned up.



### What is the proper way to dispose of a CFL bulb?

CFLs should be disposed of properly. The Southold Transfer Station accepts CFLs (as well as standard fluorescent bulbs) during normal business hours (7:00 am—5:00 pm, 7 days a week, except holidays). The bulbs are removed by a special hazardous waste handler for proper disposal. There is no fee for household users. (No bulbs or other hazardous wastes are accepted from businesses. The Transfer Station office can refer businesses to companies that can assist with their hazardous waste disposal needs).

### What should I do if a CFL breaks?

Since there is a small amount of mercury in CFLs there are limited health risks. Below are some disposal guidelines to minimize risks.

**DO NOT VACUUM!** The most important thing to remember is to never use a vacuum. A standard vacuum

will spread mercury containing dust throughout the area as well as contaminating the vacuum. What you should do is:

- Ventilate the area.
- If possible, reduce the temperature.
- Wear appropriate personal protective equipment, such as gloves, safety glasses, coveralls or old clothing, and a dust mask to keep bulb dust and glass from being inhaled.
- Carefully remove the larger pieces and place them in a secure closed container.
- Next, begin collecting the smaller pieces and dust. There are several ways to do this. You can use two stiff pieces of paper.
- Put all material into an airtight plastic bag. Pat the area with the sticky side of duct, packing or masking tape. Wipe the area with a damp cloth.
- Put all waste and materials used to clean up the bulb in a secure closed container.
- Take the container to the Household Hazardous Waste Facility.

Please Note: For more descriptive directions to clean up a small mercury spill please visit the Environmental Protection Agency at [www.epa.gov](http://www.epa.gov)