

TEST ANSWERS: MERCURY

The *BSO Plus Safety Topic* is a review designed from the BSO Plus agenda. This safety topic is your way to stay current on the safety information over the 3 years between BSO Plus and BSR.

1. The following are characteristics of mercury: (Circle all that apply)

a. Liquid at room temperature

b. Highly flammable

c. Heavy and dense metal

d. Odourless

RATIONALE: Mercury is a heavy, dense metal that is liquid at room temperature. The freezing point of mercury is below -38° Celsius (-36° Fahrenheit). The liquid is so dense that a bowling ball would float in it. Liquid mercury is quite volatile. It is odourless and will not burn however, when exposed to air, mercury metal vaporizes and can be inhaled.

2. Mercury exposure may cause flu-like symptoms that disappear within 48 hours.

a. True

b. False

RATIONALE: Exposure to mercury can cause a flu-like illness 3-10 hours after exposure. Symptoms usually disappear within 48 hours after exposure.

3. Repeated long-term exposure to mercury can result in the following: (Circle all that apply)

a. Kidney damage

b. Vision and hearing changes

c. Central nervous system problems such as tremors

d. Cognitive and behavioural abnormalities such as memory loss

RATIONALE: Repeated, long-term exposure to mercury can cause: kidney damage, central nervous system problems (stupor, tremors), vision and hearing changes, hearing loss, cognitive and behavioral abnormalities (including irritability, excessive shyness, a loss of confidence, nervousness, sleeplessness, memory loss), and reduction in fertility or harm to a developing fetus.

4. Mercury is listed as a Designated Substance under O. Reg. 490/09 and therefore requires employers to create their own specific work procedures when mercury is present on the work site.

a. True

b. False

RATIONALE: Avoid ALL unprotected contact with this product or with contaminated equipment/surfaces. Avoid generating vapors or mists. Avoid heating that will increase the amount of vapours.

5. Crude oil streams can contain mercury.

a. True

b. False

RATIONALE: Mercury is a natural component of oil and gas and may be present at high concentrations in some formations. Crude streams contain various levels of mercury which stick to the sides of vessels. Concentrations of mercury in each individual stream are not always known. Doing hot work inside a vessel, like grinding or welding, can produce mercury fumes.