Mercury

Mercury is a naturally occurring element found in soil that enters the air and water supply either by wind-blown dust or run-off. It can contaminate food, water and soil, creating multiple points of exposure. It has been used as a pesticide and is released from mines and industrial sites.

How can this chemical affect my health?

**Acute (Short Term) Effects**

- **PBT (Persistent Bioaccumulative Toxicant)** – Does not break down readily from natural processes, accumulates in organisms concentrating as it moves up the food chain, and is harmful in small quantities.

- **Birth Defects** – Can cause harm to the developing child including birth defects, low birth weight and biological or behavioral problems that appear as the child grows.

- **Reproductive Harm** – Can disrupt the male or female reproductive systems, changing sexual development, behavior or functions, decreasing fertility, or resulting in loss of the fetus during pregnancy.

- **Toxic to Humans & Animals** – Can be fatal on contact, ingestion or inhalation for humans and other mammals.

**Chronic (Long Term) Effects**

- **Endocrine Disruption** – Can interfere with hormone communication between cells which controls metabolism, development, growth, reproduction and behavior (the endocrine system).

- **Other Health Effects** – Can cause serious damage on contact or ingestion.

- **Brain/Nervous System Harm** – Can cause damage to the nervous system including the brain.

- **Sensitizes the Skin** – Can lead to allergic reactions on the skin.

- **Cancer** – Can cause or increase the risk of cancer.

Effects detailed above can occur at various stages of the product’s lifetime, not just during usage. All have been included to provide a complete picture of the chemical’s danger.