



**PACE**  
PARTNERS FOR A  
CLEAN ENVIRONMENT

## What is PACE?

PACE provides education outreach, technical assistance, and recognition for environmental achievement. The program is available at no cost to businesses in Boulder County. PACE offers:

- Assessments to identify opportunities for waste reduction, water conservation, and energy-efficiency
- Information and assistance to meet your business needs
- Compliance education
- Public recognition for your environmental efforts

## Why Participate?

**Compliance** – Our free, non-regulatory consultations help you comply with environmental laws and ordinances and reduce your liability.

**Cost Savings** - Less waste means lower disposal and operating costs. Efficient use of water, energy, and materials saves money.

**Public Image** - Environmental practices impact your image with customers, the community, and regulatory agencies.

## Public Recognition!

PACE publicly recognizes certified businesses through free advertising. This includes Internet listings and advertising in newspapers, magazines, utility bill inserts, and radio spots.

Certified businesses receive a PACE window decal and framed certificate. PACE encourages the public to support businesses that contribute to the community through environmentally sound operating practices.

# Environmental Achievement for *Dental Offices*

Spring 2009

## How Do We Become PACE-certified?

PACE's primary goal is to assist businesses in addressing their operating practices to help reduce environmental impacts on the community. Even if you are not interested in becoming PACE-certified, you can still benefit from the program!

To become PACE-certified, businesses must meet the core criteria in each of four categories, as well as two electives in each category. Once certified, businesses must complete one additional elective annually from any category in order to maintain their certification. The following is a brief example of the certification criteria:

### Management

#### Core

- Educate stakeholders about your business' environmental practices
- Verify your organization is in compliance with all applicable environmental regulations

#### Electives

- Adopt a policy/mission statement that demonstrates your business's commitment to environmental stewardship
- Designate a coordinator or team to oversee and document your on-going environmental improvements

### Energy Efficiency

#### Core

- Use programmable thermostats to manage heating and cooling loads
- Replace incandescent light bulbs with compact fluorescent lamps (CFLs) where appropriate

#### Electives

- Install occupancy sensors in rooms that require intermittent lighting
- Replace older style T-12 fluorescent fixtures with efficient T-8 fixtures

### Water Conservation and Quality

#### Core

- Install water efficient accessories, such as aerators at hand sinks
- Use non-chlorinated, neutral pH products to clean suction lines

#### Electives

- Insulate hot water pipes, boilers, and water heaters
- Install high efficiency toilets

### Resource Management

#### Core

- Properly manage and recycle amalgam
- Recover silver from X-ray systems

#### Electives

- Install a digital X-ray system
- Recycle printer toner and inkjet cartridges

## Compliance with State Hazardous Waste Laws

Dental offices generate relatively small quantities of hazardous wastes, but office staff often dispose of these wastes improperly. Under Colorado state law, hazardous waste MUST either be treated on-site or collected and sent to a facility that can deal with the waste. Through participation in PACE, you can ensure that your office is in compliance with hazardous waste regulations.

## Beyond Compliance!

Minimize or eliminate hazardous wastes at your office:

- Digital X-ray system (**minimizes fixer, developer, & lead waste**)
- Lead-free aprons (**eliminates lead use and disposal**)
- Composite fillings (**minimizes mercury use**)

Conserve water, energy, and materials and save money:

- Recycle hard-to-recycle materials (**saves valuable resources**)
- Dry-vacuum system (**can save over 50,000 gallons of water annually**)
- Digital filing system (**saves paper & storage space**)

## Amalgam waste and our environment

Placement and removal of amalgam restorations creates amalgam waste that is approximately 50% mercury. Although the mercury in amalgam is in a stable form, proper recycling of amalgam waste prevents the release of mercury into the environment. Types of amalgam waste that can be recycled include contact and non-contact amalgam.

### Contact amalgam

- Extracted teeth with amalgam fillings
- Amalgam pieces from restorations
- Amalgam captured in chairside traps
- Vacuum pump filter contents
- Amalgam separator waste

### Non-contact amalgam

- Empty amalgam capsules
- Excess unused amalgam

Discarding of amalgam waste with "red bag" waste can cause the release of toxic mercury vapor, since most infectious waste is incinerated. The majority of amalgam waste that goes down the drain is captured by wastewater treatment plants in their biosolids that are often applied to farmland, while the rest passes through the plant and is discharged to our rivers and streams. If not properly handled at the dental office, the mercury from amalgam waste pollutes our environment.

### Steps when managing and recycling amalgam waste

- Always wear safety glasses, a mask, and gloves when handling amalgam.
- Always place amalgam waste in a labeled wide-mouthed, airtight, plastic container, and ensure that the container is tightly sealed at all times.
- Follow your recycler's instructions for packaging and shipping of waste.
- Recyclers may allow you to place all amalgam waste - including capsules, non-contact amalgam, contact amalgam, traps, filters - and teeth, into the same waste container.
- Never put amalgam waste into the wastewater system, biohazard bag, or trash.

## Helpful Resources

See the PACE website for a list of helpful resource sheets

[www.pacepartners.com](http://www.pacepartners.com)

# ADA

American Dental Association  
[www.ada.org](http://www.ada.org)



Naval Dental Research Institute  
[www.dentalmercury.com](http://www.dentalmercury.com)



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