

The Mercury-Containing Lights Product Stewardship Program aims to recycle all lights that have mercury

State law requires individuals and businesses to recycle lights that contain mercury (RCW 70A.505.080). To encourage compliance and keep mercury out of the solid waste system, the Legislature established the Mercury-Containing Lights Product Stewardship Program (Chapter 70A.505 RCW).

The Department of Ecology (Ecology) oversees the program, which is designed to ensure that households and small businesses recycle mercury-containing lights. The program is managed by a private organization that plans the work. Ecology must approve the plan.

The program and plan have three parts:

- Uniform statewide requirements to recycle the lights.
- System to collect the lights statewide, including sites in all counties and each city with a population of 10,000 or more.
- Public education about the program and requirements.



The program is scheduled to sunset in 2025

In 2014, the Legislature added the program to the Sunset Act ([link](#)). This means that the program will end on July 1, 2025, unless the Legislature reauthorizes it. The Act requires JLARC to assess the extent to which the program has complied with legislative intent and whether it met its performance targets.

This study will address the following questions, consistent with the Sunset Act

Study questions define the scope of the audit, based on the study mandate. They reflect preliminary outreach, research, and the analysis of potential racial equity considerations per RCW 44.28.076.

1. To what extent has the program fulfilled the legislative intent, including keeping mercury out of the solid waste system, educating the public, and providing collection sites?
 - a. Do any disparities in access to the program exist?
2. To what extent does Ecology provide for efficient and economical management of the program, with adequate cost and management controls in place?
3. To what extent has the program achieved its performance measures?
4. To what extent does the program duplicate the activities of another agency or the private sector?
5. What are the possible effects of eliminating or changing the program, including impacts to recycling efforts?

Study timeframe

Preliminary Report: September 2024

Proposed Final Report: December 2024

Study team

Team Lead	Amanda Eadrick	(360) 786-5174	amanda.eadrick@leg.wa.gov
Project Analyst	Hanna Noorzaie	(360) 786-5172	hanna.noorzaie@leg.wa.gov
Project Coordinator	Valerie Whitener	(360) 786-5191	valerie.whitener@leg.wa.gov
Legislative Auditor	Eric Thomas	(360) 786-5182	eric.thomas@leg.wa.gov



PROPOSED STUDY QUESTIONS

Sunset Review: Mercury-Containing Lights Product Stewardship Program

State of Washington Joint Legislative Audit and Review Committee

September 2023

JLARC Study Process

