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# NEWS RELEASE

**Oct. 8, 2010 – FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Mercury Spill on City Project Site**

DUBUQUE, Iowa – On Thursday, Sept. 23, a spill of approximately two tablespoons of mercury occurred at the Dubuque Water Pollution Control Plant Renovation Project during deconstruction of the plant's trickling filters. There is no threat to public health and preventative measures have been taken to contain the mercury at the location of the spill while mitigation activities are conducted.

The spill occurred at approximately 10:30 a.m. on Sept. 23 while a trickling filter bearing housing which contained a mercury seal was being moved by contractors. Within an hour, a hazardous materials abatement contractor was asked to respond to the site and within three hours was on site assessing the situation. A contract was executed with a hazardous materials and emergency response contractor by 5 p.m. that day and the contractor was on site to begin mitigation work by 7 a.m. the next morning. Mitigation work to safely remove the mercury continues.

The spill was limited to the plant's two trickling filters, which are large concrete reservoirs filled with aggregate. The spilled mercury is contained in these reservoirs and preventative measures have been taken to ensure that the mercury does not enter the plant system, reach any waterways, or leave the site.

All appropriate agencies have since been notified of the incident and state officials have visited the site. Officials from the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) and the Iowa Occupational Safety and Health Administration (IOSH) are investigating the incident.

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