Warmerdam Field upgrade project

Includes a hazardous materials project phase that involves the removal of track material and underlying gravel, which were found to contain mercury.

Why was the mercury in the track material?

From the 1960s to the mid-1990s, schools, colleges/universities, and other facilities installed synthetic rubber-like flooring in indoor gymnasiums, field houses and outdoor running tracks. Fresno State's track was installed in the 1970's.
When mixing the polyurethane formulation to form the rubberized floor surface, phenyl-mercuric-acetate (PMA) was used as a catalyst to facilitate the liquid's spreading and leveling. According to 3M (a company that manufactured many of these products), the finished product typically contained 0.1 – 0.2 percent mercury.

How long will it take to remove the mercury-contaminated materials from Warmerdam Field?

The removal work is scheduled to begin on Dec. 21, 2015, and is expected to take less than one month to complete. After this phase is completed, the rest of the upgrade project will proceed.

What is Fresno State doing to ensure that the removal of the mercury-contaminated material is safe?

All mercury-contaminated materials are required to be removed in accordance with Cal-OSHA requirements, and disposed of in accordance with California EPA requirements.

Fresno State has hired a certified and licensed hazardous waste contractor to handle the work that will involve the removal of mercury-contaminated material.

Fresno State has contracted with a safety consultant who will be present every day of the removal process to ensure that all requirements established to safeguard contractor employees, campus visitors and employees and the environment are followed.

A fenced perimeter will be established around the work site. Contractor employees, who will be inside the fenced perimeter of the worksite and will be directly working to remove the track material, will be wearing protective equipment as a precaution from potential mercury exposure.

Air sampling for mercury vapors will be conducted multiple times daily by both the contractor and Fresno State's safety consultant. This will be done to ensure that the contractor employees inside the work site are safe, and to ensure the perimeter established provides a safe and effective barrier from exposure.

Soil samples will be collected and analyzed to ensure that all mercury contamination is removed from the site.

If you have any questions about the project, please contact Lisa Kao of the Office of Environmental Health and Safety, Risk Management and Sustainability at 559.281.5906 or lisak@csufresno.edu.