ADA's best management practices call on all dentists to use chair-side traps and (where compatible with the suction system used in the office) vacuum pump filters, and these standard control methods remove approximately 77 percent of the scrap amalgam from dental office wastewater. The waste amalgam captured by these devices can be recycled, rather than going down the drain.

“In addition to promoting scientific research into amalgam-related environmental questions, the ADA has also worked voluntarily with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to help make greater amalgam recycling a reality. Togeth-er, we developed a national consensus standard to make amalgam recycling better and more universal. That standard is known as American National Standards Institute/Ameri-can Dental Association Specification 109 9Procedures for Storing Dental Amalgam Waste and Requirements for Amalgam Waste Storage/ship-ment Containers.' In developing this standard, we reached out to EPA, re-cyclers and other parties of interest. We now provide dentists with lists of available recyclers, and we advocate compliance by these recyclers with this new consensus standard.

“None of this would have been possible had ADA not also vigorously promoted its best management practices to dentists throughout the nation. We have distributed posters and brochures explaining the BMPs to every dentist in the nation (not just to ADA members). We part-nered with the Naval Institute for Medical Research and the Naval Medical Center, Bethesda. In developing this standard, we reached out to EPA, recyclers and other parties of interest. We now provide dentists with lists of available recyclers, and we advocate compliance by these recyclers with this new consensus standard.

“The ADA is just beginning to promote its revised best manage-ment practices and will continue to do so. We expect to engage in additional outreach and educational ef-forts with our members.

“Moreover, as we did in the past, we are eager to pursue additional creative partnerships with both private sector and governmental agencies to develop new ways of reaching the dental community. We are proud of the progress our BMPs have made, but we are com-mitted to continuous improve-ments in this area.