

Used Oil Contaminated Sorbents, Absorbents, and Other Petroleum Based Contaminated Materials

Materials Management Guidance

Used oil sorbent and absorbent materials that are designed to soak up oil from spills should be recycled when possible. Many commercial absorbents can be used multiple times before they are no longer effective in cleaning up oily spills. The oil can be physically extracted, and the absorbents themselves can often be reused.

Oil-contaminated sorbents and absorbents that are not a hazardous waste and contain free liquids must be managed as a liquid industrial by-product (LIB) under Michigan's [Part 121](#), Liquid Industrial By-Products, of the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act, 1994 PA 451, as amended (NREPA). Non-hazardous oil contaminated absorbents that have exceeded their useful life and can no longer be used to contain oil spills can be disposed at a licensed [municipal solid waste landfill](#) after [profiling and approval](#) from the receiving landfill, if there are no free liquids. To find companies who offer oil recycling services, search the [Waste Data System](#). Select "Advanced Search," "Hazardous and Liquid Industrial Waste Site Activity Information," and enter "Yes" for "Used Oil Re-Refiner" and "Used Oil Processor."

For consultant and/or recycling/disposal facility assistance, see the [EGLE Consultant Directory](#), or you can search the internet for used oil recyclers in Michigan. The EPA provides a list of sorbents recyclers on their [Comprehensive Procurement Guidelines Program Webpage](#). Just scroll down to the table of vendors and search for "sorbents."

Oil-contaminated absorbents that are listed or are characteristic hazardous waste must be managed as hazardous waste and meet requirements under Part 111, Hazardous Waste Management, of the NREPA. These must be separated from non-hazardous oil-contaminated absorbents. See the following resources to learn more about waste characterization, generator status, and the accumulation requirements for hazardous waste generated at large, small, and very small quantity hazardous waste generators:

- [Waste Webinar Series Webpage](#)
- [Hazardous Waste Generator Status and Accumulation Requirements Summary](#)

Hazardous waste generators are not required to obtain a permit to add absorbent materials to hazardous waste in a container, if the conditions in Rule 503(1)(i) of the [Part 111 Administrative Rules](#) are met. The treatment must also meet the [land disposal restrictions](#) found in Rule 313 of the Part 111 Administrative Rules, involve removal of any free liquids, and have special approval from the receiving municipal solid waste landfill to be managed as a solid waste.

Reusable textiles like rags, shop towels, gloves, and uniforms that have been contaminated with oils are exempt from the hazardous waste regulations if they are reused and meet all of the following requirements in Rule 206(3)(g):

- The textiles are being laundered or dry-cleaned for reuse.
- The textiles do not contain free liquids.
- The containers used to store the textiles do not contain free liquids.
- Hazardous waste is not mixed with the textile after its original use.

Let your cleaning company know the type of oils being used, so they can determine the best way to clean the textiles and the effect on their own waste stream. If you have a sensitive process, you may want to make special arrangements with the cleaners, so that you only get your textiles back to avoid any cross contamination from chemicals or oils in materials from other facilities that they also clean.

Petroleum contaminated soil, groundwater, and other debris generated as a result of leaking underground storage tanks (UST) are exempt from the hazardous waste regulations, if it is managed to meet both of the following requirements in accordance with Rule 204(2)(m):

- ✓ The contaminated material is only hazardous due to the presence of benzene, or other D019-D043 toxic constituents found in Table 201a of the [Part 111 Rules](#), and
- ✓ The site is being cleaned up under the leaking UST requirements found in [Part 213](#), Leaking Underground Storage Tanks, of the NREPA.

This exemption does not apply to aboveground storage tanks releases, from contamination associated with a UST due to overfilling or other causes besides leaking, or other contamination sources. Discuss cleanup requirements with your [local Hazardous Waste Program staff](#). Depending on the release situation, the cleanup may be overseen by the Remediation and Redevelopment Division or the Materials Management Division.

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