



WIPERS, RAGS AND ABSORBENTS

Wipers, rags, and absorbents are commonly used on CSN campuses for cleaning spills, cleaning, disinfecting and other tasks. These materials may become contaminated with solvents, inks, oil, or grease and must be managed properly.

Disposable Wipers, Rags Absorbents

If a small number of disposable wipers, rags, and absorbents are contaminated with only oil or grease (including cooking oil), they can be thrown away in the regular trash. However, if oily wipers, rags, and absorbents are regularly generated, a waste collection container must be set up in the work area and picked up by EH&S for disposal. These containers must be labeled to describe the contents and kept closed when not in use. Wipers and rags placed in the containers must be free of any liquid that can be removed by wringing or dripping.

If wipers, rags, and absorbents are contaminated with [F-listed](#) solvents like tetrachloroethylene, methylene chloride, 1,1,1-trichloroethane, xylene, acetone, toluene, or methyl ethyl ketone, they are considered hazardous waste. Contamination with other substances such as heavy metals (e.g., cadmium, chromium, barium, lead, mercury, or silver), other organics, or pesticides may also classify these materials as hazardous waste. If any of these contaminants are present, it may be necessary to determine whether the wipers and rags are hazardous or non-hazardous. Once wipers and rags are classified as hazardous waste, they must be stored in a closed container, labeled to describe the contents, and kept in accordance with accumulation time requirements.

Laundered Shop Towels

Contaminated shop towels that are laundered for reuse are exempt from hazardous waste regulations, provided they meet the following conditions:

- Contaminated shop towels must be free of any liquid that can be removed by wringing or dripping.
- Contaminated shop towels must be kept in sealed and labeled containers during on-site storage and transportation to a laundering facility.

Spills and Leaks

Wipers, rags, and absorbents used to clean up spills of "characteristic" hazardous waste (such as flammable liquids like gasoline, corrosive liquids, or reactive and toxic waste) are not classified as hazardous waste if they are not contaminated with [F-listed](#) solvents. However, if these absorbents are saturated (meaning liquid can be squeezed out) or if there are any free liquids at the bottom of the waste container, they must be treated as hazardous waste.



To dispose of wipers, rags, and absorbents, please submit an online pickup request using the EH&S Chemical/Bio Waste Pickup Request form available at: <https://csn.campusoptics.com/hw/chemical-bio-waste-pick-up-request-form>. Please contact EH&S at 702-651-7445 or ehs@csn.edu if you have any questions.