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## Solvent-Contaminated Wipes Rule

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**40 CFR 261.4(a)(26) and 40 CFR 261.4(b)(18)**

### Do these regulations apply to my operation?

These regulations address both reusable (laundry service) and disposable solvent-contaminated rags. 40 CFR 261.4(a)(26) addresses solvent-contaminated wipes that will be cleaned (laundered) and reused while 40 CFR 261.4(b)(18) addresses solvent-contaminated wipes destined for disposal.

A solvent-contaminated wipe is defined as shop towel, rag, pad, or swab made of wood pulp, fabric, cotton, polyester blends, or other material that after use or after cleaning up a spill, contains a solvent that would be considered hazardous waste either because it is listed in the hazardous waste regulations, or because it exhibits the characteristic of ignitability.

Solvent-contaminated wipes do not include wipes contaminated with hazardous waste other than solvents, or that exhibit the characteristic of toxicity, corrosivity, or reactivity due to contaminants other than solvents.

### Solvent-contaminated wipes sent for cleaning (laundry service wipes)

40 CFR 261.4(a)(26) states solvent-contaminated wipes that are sent for cleaning and reuse are not considered solid wastes (and therefore not hazardous wastes) from the point of generation provide that:

- Accumulation, storage and transportation are conducted in non-leaking and sealed containers.
- The containers are clearly labeled “Excluded Solvent-Contaminated Wipes.”
- On-site accumulation does not exceed 180 days.
- The wipes/containers contain no free liquids prior to transport. (Recovered free liquids, if any, must be managed in accordance with other applicable 40 CFR regulations).
- The wipes are sent to a laundry or dry cleaner whose discharge, if any, is regulated under 301, 307 and/ or 402 of the Clean Water Act.
- The generator maintains:
  - » The name and address of the laundry or dry cleaner receiving the wipes
  - » Documentation that the 180-day accumulation time limit is being met
  - » A description of the process used to ensure the wipes contain no free liquids at the time of transportation for disposal.

## Solvent-contaminated wipes destined for disposal

40 CFR 261.4(b)(18) states solvent-contaminated wipes (except for those that are contaminated with trichloroethylene) that are sent for disposal are not hazardous wastes from the point of generation provided that:

- Accumulation, storage and transportation are conducted in non-leaking and sealed containers.
- The containers are clearly labeled “Excluded Solvent-Contaminated Wipes.”
- On-site accumulation does not exceed 180 days.
- The wipes/containers contain no free liquids prior to transport. (Recovered free liquids, if any, must be managed in accordance with other applicable 40 CFR regulations).
- Disposal is accomplished at:
  - » A municipal solid waste landfill regulated under 40 CFR 258 or a hazardous waste landfill regulated under 40 CFR 264 or 265 or
  - » A municipal waste incinerator or other combustion unit regulated under Section 129 of the Clean Air Act and/or 40 CFR 264, 265 or 266.
- The generator maintains:
  - » The name and address of the landfill or combustion unit receiving the wipes.
  - » Documentation that the 180-day accumulation time limit is being met.
  - » A description of the process used to ensure the wipes contain no free liquids at the time of transportation for disposal.

## What are the benefits of using the Solvent-Contaminated Wipes Rule?

The solvent-contaminated wipes rule eases the regulatory burden and associated costs for compliant management of applicable wipes.

*The Iowa Waste Reduction Center can assist your small business.  
Please contact the IWRC at 319-273-8905 for free, non-regulatory and confidential environmental assistance.*