

PROCEDURE: DISPOSAL OF OILY RAGS			NUMBER: WP-82
PREPARED BY: Facilities Management (FM)	AUTHORIZED BY:  Andrew Konowalchuk	CLASSIFICATION: Work Procedure	EFFECTIVE: September 10, 2026 SUPERSEDES: June 1, 2015

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that “oil and solvent-soaked rags” are properly managed and disposed of at Western.

When materials are soaked with organic substances such as oils, spontaneous heating through oxidation can occur. When this happens, the temperature rises until spontaneous combustion occurs and the materials ignite.

Solvent-soaked rags are also a fire hazard since many solvents are flammable. Solvent vapours released by the rags are a health hazard. If reusing solvent-soaked rags, these should be stored in a well-ventilated area.

PROCEDURE:

Dispose of unwanted oil and solvent-soaked rags in specially designed metal cans as shown below. These containers are made of metal and have self-closing covers. The risk of spontaneous combustion is virtually eliminated by limiting the oxygen in the container. The oxidation process will use up the oxygen in the container stopping the reaction, thus preventing a fire.

1. Collect rags in bag with water to soak the oil or solvent-soaked rags.
2. Seal the bag properly to ensure odours do not escape
3. Dispose of the bag with water and rags to the Oily rag drum located at the vehicle garage. Add water to the oil or solvent-soaked rags/Place the bag in a properly labelled metal drum; these drums are supplied through the Hazardous Waste program managed by Health Safety and Well-Being. Contact hazardouswaste@uwo.ca for supplies. The drum shall be labelled:
Oil or Solvent-soaked Rags / Flammable.
4. FM Stores/ FM Health and Safety Manager complete an “[Inventory Form](#)” and submit request to hazardouswaste@uwo.ca., when drum is $\frac{3}{4}$ full.

POWERPLANT SPECIFIC PROCEDURE:

1. Collect rags in the designated safety containers as shown.



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2. At the end of day, transfer the rags to a bag 3. Add water to the oil or solvent-soaked rags 4. Seal the bag properly to ensure odours do not escape 5. Place the bag in a properly labelled metal drum; these drums are supplied by Occupational Health and Safety (OHS). 6. Label the drum: Oil or Solvent-soaked Rags / Flammable 7. For removal of full drums, complete an "Inventory Form" and fax to OHS (fax # 83420). Inventory form and other waste management information may be found at: http://uwo.ca/hr/safety/topics/hazardous_waste.html <u>RESOURCES:</u> Inventory form and other waste management information may be found at: http://uwo.ca/hr/safety/topics/hazardous_waste.html	