

9441.1992(32)

RCRA/Superfund/OUST Hotline Monthly Report Question

September 1992

1. Filters Used to Reclaim CFC Refrigerant

While servicing air conditioners, a facility generates spent CFC-11 which exhibits the toxicity characteristic for carbon tetrachloride (D019). The generator reclaims the used refrigerant for subsequent reuse, and during the reclamation process generates contaminated filters which also exhibit the TC for carbon tetrachloride. According to §261.4(b)(12), the used CFC refrigerant is exempt from the definition of hazardous waste if it is going to be reclaimed for further use. If the spent filters are being discarded, would they also be excluded from regulation as a hazardous waste under §261.4(b)(12) since they are generated by the reclamation of an excluded waste?

As explained in the February 13, 1991. Federal Register (56 FR 5910), the purpose of the exclusion provided in §261.4(b)(12) is to encourage the recycling and reuse of CFC refrigerants and discourage the practice of venting them to the air. Wastes derived from the CFC reclamation process itself, however, are not exempt, and the filters would not be covered by the exclusion. Since the filters exhibit the toxicity characteristic, they must be managed as hazardous waste. Any other residues generated by the reclamation process would also need to be evaluated for characteristics, either through testing or application of knowledge.