

SHOULD OIL BE TREATED AS A BIOHAZARD?

Issue: Should oil that is used in a medical application be treated as a biohazard?

The oil is not a biohazard. The normal operating temperature of 170° F in conjunction with the temperature of the oil at the point of compression will kill the bacteria. The lubricant can harbor bacteria but the lubricant itself will not facilitate bacterial growth. Other things such as water and a food source must be present to facilitate growth in the lubricant.

For end users that are concerned about "catching" something from touching or coming in contact with the lubricant, the chances of contracting something from the lubricant are the same as they would be from just being in that environment. The lubricant will not harbor or store things which are not in the air that is being breathed.

For workers who are concerned, latex gloves can be worn, but special breathing apparatus is not necessary.

All waste oil, whether or not it is used in a medical application, should be recycled or properly disposed of according to local regulations.

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