

PREVENTION AND CONSEQUENCES OF OILY RAGS

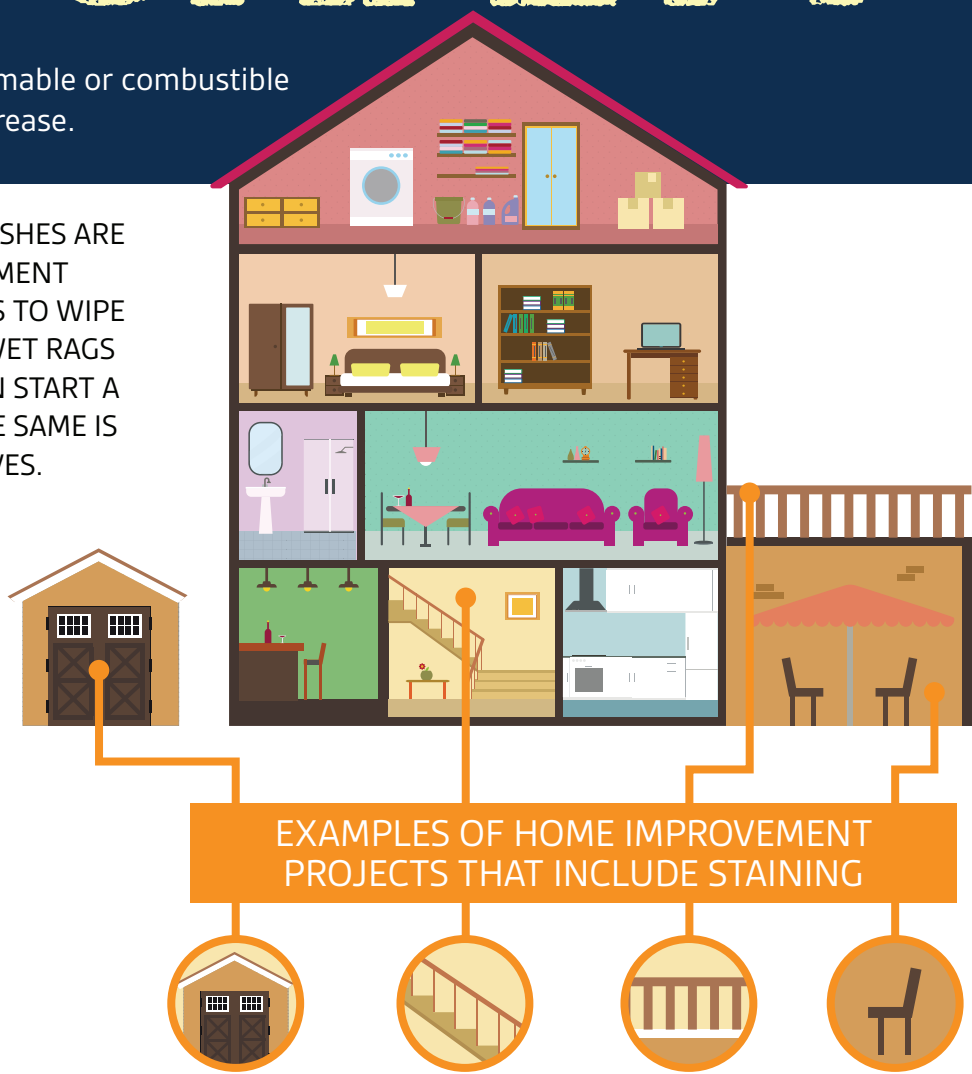
FIRE SAFETY

Safety with Oily Rags, wet with flammable or combustible liquids, and yes, even kitchen oil & grease.

OIL-BASED PAINTS, STAINS, AND VARNISHES ARE OFTEN USED FOR HOME IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS. IT IS COMMON TO USE RAGS TO WIPE UP SPILLS OR CLEAN BRUSHES, BUT WET RAGS CAN IGNITE ON THEIR OWN. THEY CAN START A FIRE IF NOT HANDLED CAREFULLY. THE SAME IS TRUE OF THE LIQUIDS THEMSELVES.

HOME FIRE FACT #1

An average of **900 home fires** per year are started when oily rags catch fire or are ignited.



WHAT CAUSES SPONTANEOUS HEATING?

1st

The oils commonly used in oil-based paints and stains release heat as they dry.

2nd

If the heat is not released in the air, it builds up.

3rd

As the rags dry, the heat is trapped.

4th

The heat builds up and finally causes a fire.

The Allegheny County Fire Marshal's Office has responded to a number of fires in the past year that were related to the **improper use and/or disposal of oil stained rags**.

EXOTHERMIC REACTION

CAN TAKE PLACE WITH COMMERCIAL KITCHEN RAGS THAT HAVE NOT BEEN LAUNDERED THOROUGHLY.



The amount of fatty oils and grease used during cooking are absorbed by the rags during daily operations and clean up.



When these rags are placed into a washer, laundry soap and bleach are added and the trapped oils and grease are not thoroughly removed,



The rags are then placed into a dryer which causes the leftover oil and grease residue to start heating.



If the rags are placed into a bag or laundry basket, the trapped heat is not able to escape and may continue to heat until a fire starts.



THE RAGS SHOULD BE LAID OUT IN AN OPEN, NON-COMBUSTIBLE SPACE AND ALLOWED TO COOL DOWN BEFORE PLACING THEM BACK INTO SERVICE.

USE & STORAGE OF GASOLINE AND OTHER FLAMMABLE LIQUIDS

DO'S

- ✓ Use gasoline only as motor fuel.
- ✓ Store gasoline ONLY in a container that is sold for that purpose.
- ✓ Make sure the container is tightly capped when not in use.
- ✓ Keep them in an outbuilding, a detached garage, or a shed outdoors.
- ✓ If you spill liquids on your clothing, remove your clothing and place it outside to dry. Once dry, clothing can be laundered.
- ✓ Keep liquids in their original containers.
- ✓ Keep them tightly capped or sealed.

DON'TS

- ✗ Never use it as a cleaner.
- ✗ Never use it to break down grease.
- ✗ Never bring gasoline indoors, even in small amounts.
- ✗ NEVER store gasoline containers in a basement or in the occupied space of a building.
- ✗ Flammable and combustible liquids should not be used near an open flame.
- ✗ Do not smoke when working with these liquids.
- ✗ Never store the liquids in glass containers.

HOME FIRE FACT #2

An average of **1,700 home fires** per year are caused by instances of spontaneous combustion or chemical reaction.

