



**HSO SPOTLIGHT No. 04-2011: Random checks of “burn bags”**

**What is the issue?** Burn bags are being returned to Headquarters employees when they are found to contain inappropriate items

**Why do we need this?** To ensure burn bags contain only classified or Controlled Unclassified Information (CUI)

**Who is impacted?** All Headquarters employees generating burn bags

**What does the HSO need to do?** Be aware of the possible return of burn bags to their originators

**NOTICE:** The information in all *HSO Spotlights* applies only at DOE Headquarters facilities in the Washington, DC area. They are not intended to apply at DOE field sites, which may have entirely different local procedures.

The Centralized Classified Destruction Facility (Hammermill) at the Germantown Facility recently became inoperable; therefore, burn bags containing classified and CUI material could not be destroyed. As a compensatory measure, Headquarters contracted with a private destruction company to shred the backlog of burn bags at a cost of 23 cents per pound. During the shredding process, it became obvious that many bags contained inappropriate items including garbage, discarded food, cans, pens, metal ring binders, air fresheners, all types of metal clips and clasps, catalogs, file folders, and personal mail. None of these items should have been placed in the burn bags because burn bags are to be used exclusively for the destruction of classified and CUI material.

Although the Centralized Classified Destruction Facility has now been repaired and is back in operation, there remains a significant backlog of burn bags awaiting destruction.

Headquarters will probably need to contract again for commercial shredding services in order to eliminate the backlog.

The Headquarters Protective Force has been directed to randomly screen burn bags delivered to the Germantown and Forrestal collection points. If the burn bag is found to contain inappropriate material, it will not be accepted or it will be returned to its originator. The purpose of these random checks is to reduce the cost of destruction and prevent damage to Centralized Classified Destruction Facility equipment.

**Additional Information:**

More information about the destruction of Classified and CUI material can be found in the Headquarters Facilities Master Security Plan. If you have any questions about destroying Classified and CUI material, please contact Tina Vaughn at (301) 903-9986.