

# By the Numbers

Oily rags can be found in all sectors of industry and at your own home. Improper use and disposal of these rags are responsible for fires, property damage, and injuries (sometimes fatal).

**14,070** – the number of fires caused by spontaneous combustion or chemical reaction in a recent 4-year period. The percentage of time oily rags were the first item ignited in these fires:

- **35%** of the time in home fires
- **34%** of the time at business properties
- **26%** of the time at manufacturing properties
- **22%** of the time at storage property fires

## TIP

### WHAT IS SPONTANEOUS COMBUSTION?

Spontaneous combustion is a byproduct of spontaneous heating, a process by which a material increases in temperature without drawing heat from its surroundings. If the material reaches its ignition temperature, spontaneous ignition or combustion occurs.

**Source:** NFPA

<http://www.nfpa.org/~media/files/news-and-research/fire-statistics/fact-sheets/combustionfactsheet.pdf?la=en>