

Drilling Waste Management — Field Quick Guide

The waste circuit from the shaker end to final disposal: the options, the numbers that matter, and the compliance basis.

The treatment train

Stage	Method	Field note
Collection	Skips, screw conveyors / augers, vacuum	Keep transfer sealed — spills are findings
Fluid recovery (NADF)	Vertical cuttings dryer (VCD)	Drives OOC toward ~3–5%; recovered fluid returns via centrifuge
Polishing	Decanter centrifuge on dryer effluent	Cleans recovered fluid before it re-enters the system
Thermal (where used)	Thermal desorption ~200–350°C	Vaporises & recovers oil; residual typically below ~1%
WBM route	Dewatering: coagulation → flocculation	Charge neutralisation first, then polymer bridging — dose by jar test
Disposal	Landfill / CRI / bioremediation per permit	Manifest every transfer — mass balance must close

The compliance numbers

Item	Basis	Note
ROC / OOC	Base fluid retained ÷ wet cuttings × 100	Gravimetric retort basis (EPA Method 1674), interval-averaged
OSPAR (NE Atlantic)	1% OOC on discharged cuttings	Effectively requires dryer performance
EPA 40 CFR 435 (US offshore SBM)	Retention limits by base fluid	Commonly cited 6.9% (internal olefin) / 9.4% (ester) — confirm current subpart values for your permit
Zero-discharge / closed loop	No cuttings overboard	Everything containerised; logistics become the KPI

The one habit that prevents findings

Log discard volume and density every day. Without it you cannot compute removal efficiency, dilution factor, or a defensible ROC average — and every audit starts by asking for exactly that log.

Full guides: scdrilltech.com/drilling-waste-management.html · [/articles/coagulation-vs-flocculation.html](http://scdrilltech.com/articles/coagulation-vs-flocculation.html) · [/articles/vertical-cuttings-dryer-vs-centrifuge.html](http://scdrilltech.com/articles/vertical-cuttings-dryer-vs-centrifuge.html)