

<u>ABSORBENT TYPE</u>	<u>ADVANTAGES</u>	<u>DISADVANTAGES</u>	<u>COMMENTS</u>
Vermiculite	Inorganic & non reactive, Absorbs all liquids, light	Not recoverable, bulky	graded by size of grain. Fireproof
Coconut Coir	Is oleophilic (loves oil) and is fire retardant.	Used for oil only	Environment friendly
Charcoal	Can be regenerated, absorbs vapours, adsorbate can be recovered.	Adsorbent rather than absorbent. Not for universal use.	Can be a class 4.1 DG.
Attapulgit Diatomaceous earth Kitty litter Saponite	excellent for organic solvents and oils. Inorganic.	Soggy with aqueous spills. Heavy, dusty, Can react with acids.	Can be slow working.
Sand	Good for smothering and damming only.	No absorbent or adsorbent power at all.	Reacts with HF.
Polypropylene	Excellent for oil; washable & recoverable. Comes in sheets, pillows, powder Good damming material.	Not totally impervious; Adsorbent rather than absorbent; not fire proof.	Used for oil spill booms.
Sawdust	For inerts only.	Class 4.1 DG; Organic	unsuitable for most jobs
Gypsum	excellent for paint and heavier liquids	can be dusty and hard to obtain in granules	Calcium Sulphate

<u>NEUTRALISER TYPE</u>	<u>USES</u>	<u>COMMENTS</u>
Citric acid	Good for ammonia and alkaline solutions	expensive
Sodium Bisulphite	For alkaline solutions	acidic
Sodium Carbonate	For acids	also known as soda ash
Sodium Bicarbonate	Weak acids only	Reacts vigorously with strong acids
Lime, calcium oxide	bromine, hydrofluoric acid	Only slightly soluble

MERCURY SPILLS Do not use powdered sulphur. Granulated zinc (not zinc dust) will form a zinc amalgam which can easily be swept up and does not release any mercury vapour. Proprietary kits and absorbents are usually ok and should be considered if you have mercury containing equipment such as barometers thermometers manometers Solutions of mercury salts can be treated with lime sulphur (a common fungicide).