



What is the Correct Particle Size for Your Destroyed Media?

It is understandable that most organizations today want to do the right thing when destroying discarded media on which is recorded personal and competitive information.

And, in this regard, it is also understandable that their initial focus is determining the appropriate particle size for the media they wish to destroy.

Unfortunately, when searching for such guidance online, the only information available often pertains to government classified information, resulting in unnecessary expense and often a high degree of unnecessary inconvenience.

Here are a few things to consider:

- No data protection regulation in the world specifies a particle size for destroyed paper or electronic equipment. They simply mandate the information be reasonably inaccessible and not reconstructible.
- Most particle size specifications issued by and for government agencies must anticipate that the materials aren't controlled after the destruction process.
- Unnecessarily meeting a very small (and irrelevant) particle size can cost 5 to 10 times what would be reasonable by regulators.
- Because of the factors above, requiring an unnecessarily small particle size may discourage compliance by front line employees, which, ironically, ends up putting the organization at greater risk.

Also consider:

- NAID AAA Certified media destruction services are required to demonstrate they prevent access to destroyed particles after the destruction process.
- Commercial media destruction firms destroy large amounts of material from multiple sources, all of which is co-mingled prior to being baled and securely recycled or responsibly discarded.
- Hundreds of thousands of organizations around the world rely on NAID AAA Certified service providers to meet the security and regulatory media destruction requirements.

i-SIGMA is a global, non-profit association dedicated to the proper destruction of discarded information for more than 27 years and believes that each organization is ultimately responsible for the protection of personal and competitive information in its possession.

The advice above is simply provided to help organizations decide what particle size best meets their needs, while avoiding the expense and risks of acting without a complete perspective.

For more information, contact the Certification Department at 602-788-6243 or certification@isigmaonline.org.