



Data Eradication Process and Security Considerations

There are typically two ways to make sure data on tape cannot be recovered. One is to degauss the media and the other is to re-write over the existing data. Degaussing erases all data and servo tracks if the tapes have servo track technology. Media products such as 3480, 3490e, DLT, SDLT can be degaussed and the media reused. However, 3590, LTO, 9840 and 9940 cartridges cannot be degaussed without destroying the servo track(s) and rendering the media permanently unusable. For these media types Certification becomes the preferred data eradication process.

The Degaussing Process:

Degaussing magnetic media bulk erases all previous data with a strong magnetic field. Degaussing reverses the polarity of the magnetic particles through the entire tape eliminating all previously recorded signals in the process. The equipment we employ provides the correct, full saturation, magnetic signal strength to eradicate all data. The tapes are restored to a blank “new tape” status for reuse.

The Certification Process:

Certification is overwriting a test pattern of all one's and zero's to each tape, and recording the error activity encountered during the process. This destroys the existing recorded signal and disrupts the data files. Additionally, a new beginning of tape file mark is written, effectively closing any read access to the tape. This not only assures that we provide a high quality Certified for Reuse media, but also ensures that previous data cannot be accessed, read or recovered.

Our process is simple:

1. Receive possession of tapes at your location providing receipt of custody.
2. Transport tapes via secured and fully insured carrier to our facility.
3. Receive tapes into our secure location.
4. Count, sort and inventory all tapes received
5. Immediately degauss all non-servo track and/or damaged media.
6. Stage servo track tape cartridges to be Certified.
7. Scan each cartridge RFID for history and status report.
8. Write certification pattern and new tape file mark on every tape and log errors.
9. Degaussed and destroyed all failed tapes.
10. Log date, process, operator and status of each tape cartridge for chain of custody and certification of data destruction.
11. Provide client with full documentation of certified data destruction.
12. Certified tapes will be cleaned, delabeled, inspected, tested packaged for reuse.

Site visits and inspections are welcomed, as are requests for changes and additions to our process to fully satisfy the security concerns of our clients. References are available upon request.