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Can Activated Carbon be regenerated?

Activated carbon cannot be regenerated like ion exchange resin. Activated carbon can be reactivated by carbon manufacturers. The reactivation process is similar to the original activation process. The resulting product is distributed for waste water applications. Municipalities contract to reactivate segregated lots for re-use.

It is possible to reactivate activated carbon with steam. Beverage manufacturers have large carbon filters which have steam injection. The heat from the steam will push off the more weakly held contaminants freeing up pores for continued use. The steam also sanitizes the carbon bed. Steam reactivation will restore the life of the carbon bed but eventually the cost outweighs the benefit and a new carbon bed must be installed.