The Benefits of Professional Wet Cleaning

Wet cleaning helps you save money while cleaning garments effectively and reducing your environmental footprint.

Are you a wet cleaner?

The New York State Pollution Prevention Institute is seeking professional wet cleaners in NYS interested in hosting a demonstration at their shop. The schedule is flexible and cleaners can receive $500 for hosting. For more information, contact Kate at 585.475.5390 or kate.winnebeck@rit.edu

New Dry Cleaning Rule for NYC Cleaners

A new rule will take effect February 11, 2014 that requires an additional notice for cleaners to inform the public how to access Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) from DEP’s website. For complete information, visit www.nyc.gov/html/dep/html/air/dry_cleaner_msdss.shtml

“I am very excited to be using wet cleaning. The building residents, my customers, and employees all benefit from this safer technology.”

— Danny Yoo, Owner, Rainbow Cleaners, Manhattan

NYSP2I is addressing the use of perchloroethylene (perc) in the NYS garment cleaning industry by promoting professional wet cleaning, an economically and environmentally preferable alternative, through the Professional Wet Cleaning Program.
Overview of a Professional Wet Cleaning System

Professional wet cleaning (PWC) uses water, detergents, and sophisticated computer controlled washers and dryers to clean garments and other fabrics labeled “dry clean only.”

Garments are sorted by fabric type, color, and weight to ensure the proper wash and dry cycles are used.

Garments may be spotted for stain removal as oil-based stains may require spotting before cleaning.

PWC washers use a frequency-controlled motor and wash programs to achieve the optimal formulation of water level, cycle time, degree of agitation, temperature, and cleaning agents for each garment load.

PWC detergents are non-toxic, pH-neutral, biodegradable, approved for discharge into sanitary sewers, and have additives to optimize cleaning ability while minimizing color change and shrinkage.

Automated detergent injection systems ensure the optimal combination of detergent and sizers are used and injected into the cleaning cycle at the appropriate time.

PWC dryers use a moisture sensor to ensure garments are sufficiently dry without over drying.

Garments are finished using traditional pressing equipment or tensioning equipment specialized for wet cleaning.

It is now against the law to install perc dry cleaning machines in residential buildings. When a machine wears-out, it must be replaced with non-perc equipment, or moved to a non-residential building. Both options require a new, modified or amended permit or registration in NYS.

Why should you use Professional Wet Cleaning?

Wet cleaning has several advantages over perc, hydrocarbon, GreenEarth®, and carbon dioxide cleaning systems. Wet cleaning has the lowest installed system cost, the smallest electricity usage per load, and the lowest operating cost over the first five years of ownership compared to perc, hydrocarbon, GreenEarth®, and carbon dioxide cleaning systems.

Sophisticated equipment, including washing machines and dryers simulate handwashing and don’t overdry. Tensioning finishers ensure jackets, pants, and structured garments are finished without shrinking.

Wet cleaning has been shown to produce whiter whites, is easier to remove water-based stains, and cleans better than perc for some items such as heavily soiled garments.

Wet cleaning significantly reduces or eliminates health and environmental concerns and their liability often seen with perc and other alternatives. Perc is a carcinogen and can affect dry cleaning workers and apartment residents living near and above cleaners. Perc is hazardous to the environment because it takes a long time to break down in air, soil, and water.

Dedicated wet cleaners in NYS are exempt from NYS-DEC permit requirements.

Wet cleaning does not generate hazardous waste, eliminating the cost and hassle associated with disposing of it.

Wet cleaners can confidently market their business as green or environmentally friendly.

“I am beyond happy with the performance of wet cleaning. I am able to wet clean all garments that I was dry cleaning before. With wet cleaning, the clothes come out cleaner, we don’t pay to get rid of perc, and my employees are happy because our shop is healthier.”

— Yong Choi, Owner, All Fabric Cleaners

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