

TURI Sponsors a Wet Cleaning Demonstration Day

Cleaners from across Massachusetts attended a TURI hosted demonstration of wet cleaning washing, drying, and tensioning equipment.



Dry cleaners viewed first hand the effectiveness of new professional wet cleaning technologies. California cleaners who have converted to wet cleaning operated the equipment and

answered questions. Representatives were also on hand from the Northeast Fabricare Association, Korean Dry Cleaners Association, National Grid (energy supplier), and equipment suppliers.

In February 2008, TURI awarded \$17,000 in matching grant funds to assist Silver Hanger Cleaners in Bellingham, Massachusetts convert to a dedicated wet cleaning facility.

"I'm convinced that wet cleaning is the future for the dry cleaning business," said Mark Isabelle. "The writing is on the wall that perc is on its way out. But rather than see it as a negative, I see it as an opportunity to grow my business by marketing a green cleaning solution to my customers who are concerned about the environment."

Mark Isabelle
Silver Hanger Cleaners
Bellingham,
Massachusetts

You can find more information about this project at:
www.turi.org/community/wet_cleaning



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Professional Wet Cleaning: *A Safer Way to Care for Garments*



*New and Improved
Professional Wet
Cleaning Technology –
A Proven Safer
Alternative to
Perchloroethylene*



Check out TURI's Wet Cleaning Web site often to find information on who's making the switch, grant opportunities, and regulatory updates. www.turi.org/community/wet_cleaning

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5 Improvements in Wet Cleaning

Since wet cleaning technology has improved dramatically over the past 10 years, garment cleaning facilities are now able to clean virtually everything with the latest wet cleaning systems.



1. Wet cleaning machines simulate handwashing—minimizing agitation yet effectively cleaning delicate garments.
2. Computer programmed detergent injection systems allow loads to be washed with precision.
3. Biodegradable detergents are used that are specially formulated to maximize cleaning power while preserving color and size.



4. Dryers are equipped with moisture sensors to ensure clothes are not over dried.
5. Special tensioning equipment is used at the end of the process to provide appropriate final finishing of jackets, pants, and tailored items.

“On the whole, wet cleaning has produced cleaner, fresher looking clothes for my customers.”

— Myeong-Ho Lowe, Owner of Utopia Cleaners, Arlington, MA

“Once I learned that wet cleaning was an option, I requested it from my local dry cleaner and have been perfectly satisfied. Plus, I feel good that I am helping to protect the environment.”

— Ruth Schreiber, Customer, Arlington, MA

Eliminate the use of perchloroethylene It's good for your business, health, and environment

What should you consider when choosing an alternative?

There are a number of alternatives to perchloroethylene for garment cleaning, but many of them have environmental, health and safety concerns, or have not been thoroughly studied. Of the available alternatives, wet cleaning and CO₂ have the fewest hazards associated with them.

We recognize that you have a choice of cleaning processes and agents. Our goal is to encourage you to make the switch to wet cleaning or CO₂. These safer alternatives not only protect your health and the environment, but also create a “green” niche for your business.

Switching to wet cleaning can be a great business decision. The environment, your customers, you and your staff, and your bottom line will benefit from a switch to a truly environmentally friendly alternative to perc.

Please contact TURI at 978-934-4343 or joy@turi.org to receive a 5 minute informational video with a live demonstration of wet cleaning—information is presented in both English and Korean.

You can also check out more information about TURI and wet cleaning and view the video at www.turi.org/community/wet_cleaning

What is perc?

Perc is a synthetic chlorinated hydrocarbon. It is primarily used as a solvent in dry cleaning and in industrial applications.¹

How can it affect you?

Short term exposure to perc can cause symptoms such as skin, eye, and respiratory irritation, headache, and nausea; very high exposure can be fatal. Long term exposure to perc may cause liver, kidney or central nervous system damage. Perc may also affect the developing fetus. The International Agency for Research on Cancer lists perc as a probable human carcinogen (Group 2A).²

How prevalent is the use of perc?

Since the 1960s, the dry cleaning industry has used perc as its primary cleaning solvent. There are over 550 dry cleaning facilities in Massachusetts that report their perc use as part of MassDEP's Environmental Results Program. These facilities use over 970,000 pounds of perc, resulting in the generation of 600,000 pounds of hazardous waste per year.³

Why Switch to Wet Cleaning?

Wet cleaning is...

1. A proven energy efficient process
2. Free of hazardous air emissions
3. Free of hazardous waste production and disposal costs
4. Safer for you and your workers
5. A way to lower your operating costs
6. Satisfying to your customers
7. A simple process for you and your workers to learn
8. A high tech way to clean everything that comes through your doors
9. A way to truly be a “green” business

This information is provided by the Massachusetts Toxics Use Reduction Institute (TURI) at the University of Massachusetts Lowell. Established by the State Toxics Use Reduction Act of 1989, TURI provides research, training, technical support, laboratory services and grant programs to reduce the use of toxic chemicals while enhancing the economic competitiveness of local businesses. TURI does not endorse or recommend any product or company.

^{1,2}Toxics Use Reduction Institute, Five Chemicals Alternatives Assessment Study, June 2006.
³Toxics Use Reduction Institute, Massachusetts Chemical Fact Sheet, Perchloroethylene, 2007.
www.turi.org/library/turi_publications/chemical_fact_sheets