

Spot News

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DOW

Spring 2002



From Dow's Drycleaning Industry Development Manager

As we enter into the second quarter of 2002, we continue to reflect on the past and commit to the future. In keeping with that theme, we bring you a little of both in this edition of SPOT NEWS. The terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 changed our lives and our world profoundly. As we look back over the past several months, as a nation we can be proud of how we have come together in the aftermath of this tragedy and be proud of what has been accomplished. We will not forget. And while we all have carried on with business as usual, I'm sure we all do so with a different sense of what is really important and a renewed commitment to everyone who touches our lives.

We are sometimes asked 'How can I talk to my customers about perc?' As part of our commitment to you, we've added something new in this issue—something for your customers. Page 11 is "Have You Ever Wondered," which has been prepared for you to copy and use with customers. This piece explains the benefits of using perc in drycleaning and will help you answer customer questions when they arise. We hope you'll let us know if you think this is useful, or if you have ideas for potential additional articles like this.

On a final note, I leave you with a challenge. I was particularly impressed by an article about the home drycleaning market in a recent issue of *National Clothesline*. It seems that many companies that have been offering home drycleaning kits found that sales haven't nearly met their expectations. Don't be complacent or smugly think, 'It's no wonder. Everybody knows consumers want their clothes fully CLEANED and PRESSED, not just spot cleaned and fluffed.' Remember, these are big companies with extensive consumer research capabilities. While they may have missed the mark with their product offering this time, they clearly identified unmet needs that consumers, your current customers, think are critical: Consumers hate ironing; more than 50% reported having performance problems with their drycleaner; many find it a hassle to take clothes to the cleaner; and a large majority think drycleaning services are too expensive (not surprising when so many have performance complaints).

As long as these consumer perceptions exist, *some* company is going to try to develop products and services to meet those needs. You can sit back and wait for some company to take away your business. Or, you could take time now to critically evaluate the quality of your services. How many stains do you miss? How often do you add a slip saying, 'we couldn't get this stain out.' How many slacks go out with double creases? Do you bag so many garments together that by the time the customer gets them home some are wrinkled? Do you really replace buttons like you say you do? With additional attention to details, YOU can be the company that consumers continue to seek out to fulfill their garment care needs. I hope you take up the challenge and with it my best wishes for continued success!

Maybe we shouldn't go back to business as usual. Let's do business better.

Sincerely,

Janet C. Hickman
Drycleaning Industry Development Manager
The Dow Chemical Company

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Marketing Perspectives



Many Opportunities For Drycleaning Industry In 2002

By Elaine Murphy
Drycleaning Industry
Manager
The Dow Chemical Company

As we move forward through 2002, we would like to reflect on the positive impact we have all made to the drycleaning industry over the years. As an industry we have placed emphasis on higher quality standards of the work we do, implemented improved equipment technology, placed emphasis on the training of employees, as demonstrated in New York, and placed extra emphasis on doing things right for the future of the industry.

In this issue of *Spot News*, we focus on these positives, and we hope you will use them as a reminder as you work toward a

prosperous year. The positives include the benefits and importance of closed-loop delivery technology as was promoted at Clean '01 in our "Get Connected" theme. This issue also reminds drycleaners of the positives of following the guidelines for the safe use of perc. Dow offers extensive resources on safe-handling information on perc and other resources for you and your employees. Examples include the Basic Handbook for Drycleaners, Safety with Solvents posters, and the Dosimeter Badge Program. These are available through your local distributor of DOWPER* solvent. This would be a good time to refresh your safety practices and guidelines and update your records, training programs, environmental compliance, etc. at your plant.

In this issue, we also feature distributors of DOWPER solvent who have been recognized for their environmental responsibility through the Textile Care Allied Trade Association's (TCATA) Health and Environmental Leadership Program

(HELP). These distributors have proven their commitment to the safe use and handling of perc and environmental responsibility.

Lastly, our quality emphasis continues with our drycleaner spotlight story on Careful Cleaners in Toronto, Canada. This is a fellow drycleaner who has discovered the benefits gained a million times over by focusing on unparalleled quality, customer relationships and environmental responsibility, including the closed-loop delivery system. In fact, Careful Cleaners has been the recipient of numerous civic, governmental, environmental and business awards including the P4 Pollution Prevention Award from the Province of Ontario. Congratulations, Careful Cleaners!

We continue to be faced with many challenges, but along with those we can gain many opportunities and positive rewards if we focus our efforts on the right things. Best to all of you and your employees! ❖

2001 Industry Activity Notes

California—the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) is drafting additional regulations for perc dry cleaning. The initial draft, presented at a public workshop this past September, included language for the eventual phase out of perc in drycleaning. An industry coalition task force, with representatives from CCA, IFI, KDLA, GLADCA, Harbor, NCA and HSIA (including Dow), continues to actively negotiate with South Coast staff to develop a regulatory proposal that will not require any phase out of perc by implementing best available equipment technology within a timeframe that satisfies the overall need to reduce potential risk

within SCAQMD requirements. South Coast staff's final proposal is anticipated to be presented to the Board at their May 3rd, 2002 meeting.

Raleigh, NC—EPA's Office of Air Quality and Pollution Standards (OAQPS) is chartered to assess the impact that implementation of the drycleaning NESHAPs of 1993 has had on reducing the risks associated with perchloroethylene emissions. Dow, along with HSIA, IFI and NCA, has been working with OAQPS to help ensure the agency uses accurate, updated industry performance information in the residual risk assessment.

Washington, DC—This past December

OSHA published its regulatory agenda for 2002. The list of projects for 2002 reflects recent directives from the Office of Management and Budget for agencies to prioritize projects and only list those which will be actively pursued with expected rulemaking within the upcoming 12 months. Thus, while the latest agenda does not include revising the perc PEL it does not mean that perc is off OSHA's radar screen, but certainly is a positive signal from OSHA that industry efforts are recognized. The drycleaning industries' success in reducing perc consumption by using more efficient equipment has clearly reduced worker exposure. The HSIA sponsored health related studies which are

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*Trademark of the Dow Chemical Company

Witnesses To The Attack

The terrorist attack on the World Trade Center created a shock-wave throughout our country. Shortly after the event we spoke to several of our friends in New York to learn of their experiences. We bring you their memories now, lest any of us forget.

Lester Cohen, president of Cleaners Sales and Equipment Corp., was a direct eye-witness of the attack. Lester's firm, which supplies DOWPER solvent to many drycleaning firms in the New York metropolitan area, is located in Brooklyn, NY, a short distance from the river that separates Brooklyn from downtown Manhattan and the scene of the attack.

Lester was crossing the George Washington Bridge on the morning of September 11, on his way from his home in the northern suburbs, when he saw smoke rising from the World Trade Center in the distance. He didn't know what to make of the sight, but the car radio informed him of the ongoing events as he worked his way through traffic to his plant. The building was empty when he arrived, because the whole staff was on the roof watching in horror as the first of the Twin Towers collapsed.

"It was surreal, like a George Lucas film," said Lester. "I couldn't believe what I was seeing. I went back to my office for a few minutes, but shortly people came running down the stairs, screaming that the second tower had collapsed."

"Later I went out to the river, where hundreds of people were sitting and standing along the embankment, many of them in tears."

By this time, all bridges and tunnels into Manhattan were closed except to emergency vehicles. And there was a steady stream of these.

For more than a week after that, people in the city were in a daze. "I was able to function physically and get things done," said Lester, "but mentally, I was overwhelmed—as was everyone else."



A serene view of the World Trade Center as it stood before September 11th.

One of Lester's customers is located a few short blocks from the Twin Towers, in a neighborhood that was evacuated. Even though his plant sustained only minor damage, the owner was unable to return or to resume operation for several weeks.

"Small businesses, the mom and pop stores, are the real backbone of our economy," Lester said, "and it will be difficult for many of them to recoup their losses."

Nora Nealis, executive director of the Neighborhood Cleaners Association, was some distance from the disaster, in midtown Manhattan. During the first few days after the attack, however, she was working in a soup kitchen serving meals to the rescue workers, witnessing the exhaustion and burn-out of the police and firefighters.

As far as Nora knew, there were no dry cleaning plants in the Twin Towers themselves, although there was one in the nearby Marriott Hotel, which was one of the buildings that collapsed. "We have been unable to reach the people from that plant," she said, "but we assume they got out safely."

Three drycleaners in the immediate vicinity of the WTC remained closed for more than a week, waiting for gas and electricity to return to their areas. Many more plants were farther from "Ground Zero," but stayed closed through the days when lower Manhattan was closed off. "Business interruption insurance has helped some of these drycleaners," Nora said.

"Actually, some drycleaners may not realize they have this insurance," she cautioned. "It may be part of their general insurance policy. It makes sense to check with your insurance agent to make sure."

Newspapers across the country continue to be full of stories about the heroism of New Yorkers, including the rescue workers who have labored through exhaustion in the rubble. There are many unsung heroes, too—the people who picked up after the tragedy, striving to return to business as usual, refusing to let terrorists dictate their lives. Many of these are service suppliers like drycleaners, and many of them are working through great difficulties. ❖

Guidelines for the Safe Use of Perc

Drycleaning with perchloroethylene, as most drycleaning professionals recognize, is the most effective and economic process for cleaning and caring for a wide range of garments and fabrics. It is also one of the safest—safe for drycleaning employees, for customers, and for the environment.

These benefits exist, however, only when perc is handled properly, within the guidelines laid down by OSHA and other regulatory agencies, and in accordance with the procedures recommended by Dow, HSIA, and the drycleaning trade associations.

Like other chemical solvents, perc must be handled with care. A little perc goes a long way and does an excellent job. Care must be taken, however, to prevent overexposure, which means exposure well above the recommended guidelines. Consequently, it is important for the drycleaner to keep human exposure to perc at a minimum during regular cleaning activities, and to handle spills and other accidental releases properly. By making a commitment to always handle perc with care, using best available equipment technologies and sound pollution prevention practices, you can help make sure that you will be able to continue to use perc well into the future.

Exposure Reduction

The first step in reducing the exposure of your employees to perc vapors is to upgrade your equipment. Fortunately, the advances in drycleaning equipment design have made this easy. Here, according to NIOSH, is how each generation of drycleaning machines stacks up in perc exposure on an eight-hour time-weighted average (TWA):

- First generation, transfer machines: 40 to 60 parts per million (ppm) TWA.
- Second generation, dry-to-dry vented machines: 15 to 20 ppm TWA.
- Third generation, dry-to-dry non-vented machines with refrigerated condensers: 15 to 20 ppm TWA.

- Fourth generation, dry-to-dry non-vented machines with secondary vapor control: less than 3 ppm TWA.
- Fifth generation, dry-to-dry non-vented machines with secondary vapor control and drum monitor, less than 2 ppm TWA.

As for peak exposures, the first, second and third generation machines may have exposed workers to instantaneous vapor concentrations up to 4,000 ppm, while fourth and fifth generation machines can maintain peak worker exposure below the OSHA maximum Short Term Exposure Limit (STEL) of 300 ppm.

Ventilation should be used in the drycleaning plant to move perc vapors away from workers and either bring them to a vapor recovery system or exhaust them from the work area. Since each drycleaning plant is unique in its layout and situation, it is wise to consult a competent ventilation contractor on vent location, as well as public health authorities on local air quality standards. In addition, an adequate source of fresh make-up air is necessary to replace the air that is vented.

How much exposure is safe for your employees? The current OSHA regulation places the permissible exposure limit (PEL) at an eight-hour TWA of 100 ppm. Several states have independently adopted a 25 ppm PEL. Currently, the American Conference of Governmental Industrial Hygienists (ACGIH) advocates 25 ppm as a threshold limit value for perc, and Dow's product literature and MSDS also recommend the 25 ppm eight-hour TWA.

Regular monitoring of the vapor levels in your plant is important for the safety of your employees, and monitoring can determine the effect of your equipment improvements and your safe work practices. To help you monitor your employees' exposure, Dow provides a free dosimeter badge together with a program to analyze and report back the vapor level recorded in an exposed

badge. To take advantage of this program, contact your distributor of DOWPER solvent. He or she will submit your name and the number of dosimeter badges you will need to Dow's consulting firm, which will send you the badges, with instructions for using them and a mail-back container.

Each dosimeter badge, with the protective cover removed, is to be worn on an employee's clothing for a recorded amount of time, to determine the amount of perc vapor the employee is exposed to over this period. On completing the exposure, send the badges back for analysis. The consultant reports the results to you. These data will remain confidential between you and the consultant; Dow only receives general industry trend data from the consultant.

Spills and Leaks

In case of a spill or leak of perchloroethylene, it is important to remove the spilled solvent quickly and safely both for the safety of your employees, and to protect the environment. Anyone who observes a spill of perc should report it immediately, but only those persons who have been trained in safe procedure and are properly equipped should clean up the spill. Be sure to have an emergency spill clean-up plan in place in your plant, so that ventilation procedures and remedial action can be implemented immediately. In addition, check with your distributor of DOWPER solvent or your local drycleaner association for information on local emergency response regulations.

Information for rapid and correct clean-up of spills are included in Dow's publication, "A Basic Handbook for Drycleaners," and the Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) for DOWPER solvent. You should be fully conversant with this material. Here are a few points to keep in mind:

- Evacuate the spill area immediately and start as much air flow-through as possible. If the release exceeds the reportable

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SAFETY POSTER from Dow is ideal for display wherever perchloroethylene is used.

quantity, notify the appropriate emergency response and regulatory authorities.

- Clean up the spill promptly. Use the proper safety equipment—a respirator and gloves which are rated for handling perc. Always have a back-up person, also properly equipped, standing by outside the spill area to assist if the clean-up person becomes unable to work.
- Throw a blanket, cloths or rags over the spill to absorb the solvent, put these cloths in the empty wash wheel of your drycleaning machine, and keep the door closed. Repeat this procedure until all liquid solvent is picked up and the floor is dry. Then put the drycleaning machine on the drying cycle to remove and recycle the perc.
- As an alternative procedure, pick up the perc with a noncombustible absorbent

training aids and courses—and this is one of the many reasons why it is valuable to belong to an association.

The information we have provided here is only a summary of the main points that should be considered in a safety program for your plant. A number of references and helps are available to help you establish a complete program. Among these are:

- DOWPER solvent MSDS
- Dow’s “A Basic Handbook for Drycleaners” (Form No. 100-05803). This valuable publication is also available in Korean (Form No. 100-6679), Spanish (Form No. 100-06856), Portuguese (Form No. 100-06889), and Chinese (reformed characters, Form No. PA 18-123-0498).
- Dow’s safety poster, “Safety with Solvents”. This is available both in wall

material, sold specifically for cleaning up chemical spills, and shovel it into closed containers. Then dispose of it through your licensed waste handler.

- Above all, never stay in an area if you detect the odor of perc through your respirator. Leave the area immediately and use fresh cartridges or a new mask before re-entering.

Importance of Training

One can never emphasize too much the importance of training your employees in the proper handling of perc and the safety procedures that are necessary. Dow provides a safety training videotape which can be used for this purpose, and it can be obtained from your distributor of DOWPER solvent. Drycleaner associations also provide excellent

poster size (18 by 24 inches, Form No. 100-6304), and the handy 8 1/2 by 11 inch size (Form No. 100-6672).

- Dow’s Machine Sticker for your drycleaning machine. This contains safety warnings and first aid and medical information (Form No. 100-06479). These Dow publications can be obtained from your distributor of DOWPER solvent, by contacting Dow’s Customer Information Group at 1-800-447-4DOW (1-800-447-4369), or through Dow’s Web site, www.dowper.com.
- “The Safe Handling of Perchloroethylene Dry Cleaning Solvent,” published by the Halogenated Solvents Industry Alliance (HSIA), 200 L Street, NW, Washington, DC 20036, or through the organization’s Web site, www.hsia.org.
- “Control of Exposure to Perchloroethylene in Commercial Drycleaning,” NIOSH Publications 97-154 through 97-160, published by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Public Health Service, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. These can be ordered from NIOSH by calling 1-800-35-NIOSH (1-800-356-4674), or through the Institute’s Web site, www.cdc.gov/niosh/homepage.html. ❖

New Independent Study Released on Perc

The American Council on Science and Health, an independent non-profit consortium of physicians and scientists dedicated to consumer education, has recently released their report, “The Scientific Facts about the Dry-Cleaning Chemical Perc.”

Dow “Gets Connected” At Clean ‘01

“Last year’s Clean Show was clearly a success by every measurable standard. It’s always beneficial to meet with friends and associates in the industry.”

*Elaine Murphy
The Dow Chemical Company*

Inside New Orleans’ Ernest N. Morial Convention Center the atmosphere was bustling and cool, despite the intense July heat outdoors, as Clean ‘01 hosted an international gathering of drycleaners, launderers and people from the allied trades. Billed as the “largest textile exposition in the world,” the Clean Show drew thousands of fabricare professionals, some from as far away as China, Brazil, and Germany. Held every two years, the Clean Show is an opportunity for drycleaning and laundry professionals to

exchange ideas on services, equipment and best practices.

As is our custom, Dow was present at the show with its own booth. We emphasized the need to “Get Connected” with the Closed-Loop Delivery System for DOWPER solvent.

Dow’s booth drew many visitors with its full-scale wall structure depicting the back of a drycleaning machine, complete with a real connection device. Dow representatives from the company’s sales, marketing, and technical service departments were on hand to demonstrate how, with a simple one-time investment in dry-disconnect couplings, a drycleaner can have complete closed-loop delivery of solvent.

“We focused on the connection system at this year’s Clean Show,” says Elaine Murphy, Dow’s drycleaning industry manager.

“Closed-loop delivery will virtually eliminate vapor releases or spills.”



Attendees watch a demonstration of Dow’s Closed-Loop System at Clean Show ‘01.

“For complete closed-loop delivery, it is vitally important for drycleaners to properly install the system’s machine fittings,” she adds. “Our booth demonstration at Clean Show showed them how to do this.”

Dow representatives also demonstrated the various safety features of Dow’s Closed-Loop Delivery System and answered product and technical questions from booth visitors. The Dow representatives showed how the system provides for both solvent flow and vapor return through a single connection, preventing any liquid or vapor from escaping.

Dow’s “Distributor Event Dinner,” held at New Orleans’ D-Day Museum, was an opportunity for Dow representatives to informally network with distributors. All who attended were treated to an evening of great food, entertainment, an awards program (see following story), and a tour of one of the country’s great veterans’ museums, dedicated to the men and women who served in World War II.

“Events such as these give us the opportunity to speak with our customers and reach out to potential customers,” says Murphy. “We hope that all of our booth visitors gained some valuable information on the benefits of our closed-loop system.” ❖



A Dow representative takes information from a customer for Dow’s automated survey at Clean ‘01. Using a sophisticated tracking system, Dow representatives asked customers to participate in a marketing survey designed to fulfill requests for the speedy delivery of company or product information. Customers registered, completed profile information and queried Dow representatives at Dow’s booth.

Dow's Distributors Recognized for Environmental Responsibility



AMONG THE DISTRIBUTORS receiving Dow's recognition for participation in the HELP initiative are (from left) Lester Cohen, Dave Eckenrode, James Hartley, Joel Dampier, Everett Burns, and Marc LeRoy.

Distributors of DOWPER solvent are demonstrating their environmental enthusiasm by completing the HELP initiative (Health and Environmental Leadership Program) developed by the Textile Care Allied Trades Association (TCATA). This unique initiative is a voluntary program designed to assist manufacturers and distributors in the textile care industry to improve their health, safety and environmental performance.

Dow, as a member of TCATA, is 100 percent in support of HELP, and has been encouraging distributors to participate in the program. At the Clean Show in New Orleans last summer, Dow held a "Distributor Dinner Event" at which 13 distributors who completed the program—including people in charge of branch offices—were recognized with an award.

Each of these distributors completed a step-by-step procedure to evaluate their performance in the areas of health, safety, and the environment. Following this, each received a confidential assessment to help them implement suggested upgrades in their procedures. Also included in the program is a video to assist employees in the safe handling of chemicals.

Distributors recognized at the event for their participation in the HELP initiative included:

Joe Amato, Amato Industries

Everett Burns, USA Clean

Lester Cohen, Cleaners Sales and Equipment Corp.

Joel Dampier, Phenix Supply

Dave Eckenrode, Laundry & Cleaners Supply

James Hartley, Phenix Supply

Janis Jaques, John Danais Co.

Marc LeRoy, Morwhite

Dave Richards, Barton Solvents

Since then, Jeff Allen, E.J. Thomas; Steve Michalec, M&L Supply; and Doug Rowell, Workroom Supply have also completed the program.

As more distributors complete the program, Dow will acknowledge their participation, and we will publish their names in SPOT NEWS. Dow's goal, of course, is to achieve full participation by all distributors and branch offices. ❖

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currently underway will also now have time to be completed for input into the OSHA process.

State Drycleaning Groundwater Cleanup Programs—drycleaners in fourteen states have been successful in having legislation passed to create trust funds for soil and groundwater remediation and are in various stages of implementation. North Carolina has defined additional pollution prevention

practices, effective in January, 2002, including requirements for closed-loop delivery. In addition, the state's Department of Environment and Natural Resources has recently completed its report: *Alternatives to the Predominant Dry Cleaning Processes*.

It concluded that 'PERC can be used safely with properly maintained Gen (eration) 4 and Gen (eration) 5 equipment.' The complete

report is available from the North Carolina DENR web site: www.p2pays.org.

Drycleaners in Oregon, meanwhile, passed legislation in June to renew and restructure their program. Under the new program, funding will be generated through a combination of fees for each drycleaning site and on gross revenues along with a solvent surcharge. The surcharge for perc is now \$10/gallon and other solvents are assessed at \$2/gallon.

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Tradition and Innovation Spell Quality for Toronto Drycleaner

For most of the 20th century, Careful Hand Laundry & Dry Cleaners (or Careful Cleaners, as it's often called) has been providing customers in the Greater Toronto metropolitan area with quality drycleaning and laundry services. Like drycleaning colleagues in other parts of North America, this Ontario drycleaner has witnessed many changing issues in the industry, but what has remained constant is the solid reputation that owners Brian Chelsky and his wife Risa have worked hard to build with their customers—a reputation based on excellent service, an above average product, and technological innovation.

“There are more similarities than differences when comparing cleaners in the U.S. to those in Canada,” says Chelsky. “From the way we conduct ourselves as business people, to our decision to use a closed-loop delivery system of solvent, to the way we care for our environment, we are very much alike. Our regulations may differ, but we are all careful to fulfill our obligations by adhering to those regulations. We owe it to ourselves and our customers.”

Since 1929, Careful Cleaners has provided its customers with unparalleled care of their garments and attention to service. Jack and Alex Shindman, Chelsky's great-uncle and grandfather respectively, started their business by offering customers a simple hand-finished pressing service. Under Brian's parents Sidney and Brenda Chelsky, Careful Cleaners grew from a custom press shop to one that could handle multiple cleaning duties including hand laundry, drycleaning, and commercial laundry and hotel valet work. In 1997, Brian and his brother acquired the business from their parents. Today, Brian and Risa are sole owners.

Careful Cleaners has its main office and cleaning plant in downtown Toronto, near the heart of the city's business and financial district, with two satellite stores and a home delivery route strategically placed further out in the residential areas. In addition, Chelsky has started a licensee program and future plans may include expanding further.

Innovation for the Future

There is only one way to describe Careful Cleaners—innovative. Keeping the integrity of his family's traditions, Chelsky has worked hard to place his own mark on the business. With a solid vision of the future, he has developed his stores into a high-tech drycleaning operation. All his stores are computerized to keep track of customer's garments as well as handle inventory and accounting. Chelsky cleans in two 55 lb., fifth-generation Union drycleaning machines. And he receives solvent via Dow's state-of-the-art Closed-Loop Delivery System for DOWPER solvent.

“My family was probably one of the first drycleaners to sign-up for Dow's Closed-Loop Delivery System,” he says. “When we first heard about Dow's new system, we knew we had a winner. We had been wanting to reduce the amount of solvent that might be released into the environment. What we didn't realize is that Dow's closed-loop system would virtually eliminate all releases and spills. It certainly has met and exceeded our expectations.”

“When we selected our new location in 1995, our neighborhood business association became concerned that a cleaner was about to move into their area,” Chelsky recalls. “I figured their concern came from their misconception that a cleaner might be the source of unwelcome odors and waste. I volunteered to give them a tour of my store and plant, and they were amazed at what they were not smelling. They asked me if I really clean here! I showed them how the closed-loop delivery system works

and how perc is transported in a self-contained cart. I also explained how perc is then transferred in this closed-loop system from cart to drycleaning machine without any possible release of solvent into the air, ground or soil.”



BRIAN AND RISA CHELSKY have worked to build a business that values customers, employees, and care for the environment.

“You know, I never heard back from them,” Chelsky says laughing. “Not because they didn't like us, but because they saw first-hand that we are totally ethical in the way we conduct our business, we are honest in what we do, and we operate safely and in an environmentally friendly manner. To this day, I have not heard another complaint from our neighbors about our store.”

Information on the Web

Another innovation Chelsky has added to his business is his customer-oriented Web site, launched earlier this year. According to Chelsky, it provides a direct connection to his customers. With “hits” into the thousands, Chelsky has received overwhelming positive feedback from his customers and others. In fact, the Ontario Fabricare Association asked Chelsky for his assistance in developing their Web site (www.fabricare.org).

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(continued from page 9) Tradition and Innovation Spell Quality for Toronto Drycleaner

At www.carefulhandlaundry.com, customers can find additional Careful Cleaner locations, request a pick-up or access information on other laundry services, all with a click of a mouse. A customer may also give Chelsky instant feedback via a personal email link, and can participate in an online survey that helps Chelsky develop new services based on customer's responses. Future plans include adding the capability to track the readiness of customer's garments.

"Information is a powerful tool," he observes. "If a business owner is savvy enough to make it easy for his customers to get the information they need and want, then I believe that business owner will be successful. This is the difference between those cleaners that are here today and gone tomorrow, and those cleaners that ride into tomorrow."

Building Relationships

Hand-in-hand with his use of technology is Chelsky's belief in building relationships with those who can have a positive impact on his business. His long running relationship with Dalex, his distributor, is a testimony to this philosophy. Dalex provides Careful Cleaners with those business products and services crucial to the smooth operation of the business. It's a relationship built over many years of mutual trust.

"We have been working with Careful Cleaners for many years now," explains Nick Mazolli, Area Sales Manager at Dalex. "When we met the Chelsky family, we knew that trust, dependability and reliability would be important factors in our working relationship. This is why we took the time to build this business relationship, and this is why we are committed to their success."

"We have been in business with Dalex for a long, long time," says Chelsky, "and we

expect to continue doing business with them, because they have proved themselves over the years."

Chelsky is steadfast and almost passionate about the products he uses, especially those products that have proved themselves to work time and time again. His philosophy is based on being faithful to what works.

"Our family has used perc ever since it was introduced way back when, and we haven't stopped using it since," he says. "Why? Because it works. Complementary alternatives to perc are emerging, but as far as I am concerned, perc is the best non-aqueous

solvent on the market today. Nothing that I have seen comes close to it in cleaning power. We add detergents and other additives to the solvent to help it clean better, and we distill the solvent constantly so that we always have fresh solvent and detergents washing our garments. This might seem like the 'old fashioned' way of cleaning, but believe me, the old reliable perc gives us an edge, especially in today's competitive business environment."

"Our family has been dedicated to providing quality service to our customers for a long time," Chelsky explains, "and we

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THE NEW HIGH-TECH store front of Careful Cleaners today. Customers and potential customers may browse through Careful Cleaners' Web site and find the information they are looking for with a click of a mouse.

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know what works and doesn't work. I like telling customers about a man whom we phoned to tell him that his shirt was worn and finally unusable. He was irate that we were no longer able to make it look like new. We had to explain to him that the shirt was 23 years old, while most shirts today last two to three years. We had been keeping his shirt in top condition well past its expected lifetime!"

Loyalty to Employees

Chelsky's belief in forging long-term relationships also applies to his nineteen employees. Two employees have retired, but the rest have been with Careful Cleaners for many years. "It's about loyalty and trust, something that is becoming rare in today's business world. Do you know how much turnover we have had? Zero!" Chelsky states, as he makes the zero symbol with his hand. "Our employees want to stay with us because we do everything we can to help them succeed, we provide a safe and comfortable working environment, and we help them build a better life for themselves. I wouldn't work here myself if I thought this wasn't a safe place to work. That's why I take every precaution to ensure our employees' well being and safety."

Chelsky looks back at the rich history his family has in the drycleaning business. He notes the many civic, governmental, environmental and business recognition and awards his business has received, including the P4 Pollution Prevention Award from the Province of Ontario. He looks at all the successes during some troubling periods; but his attention is squarely focused on the twenty-first century.

"I have two children," he says, "a two and three year old, and I want to be able to not



CAREFUL CLEANERS, which dates back to 1929, has a long history and tradition of cleaning customers' garments in Toronto, Ontario.

only build a solid and growing business for them but also to instill in them an appreciation for others and for our environment. Hopefully they will consider Careful Cleaners to be a business that cares about its customers, employees and the environment, and about the ethical manner in which we conduct ourselves. We are proud of our long

history and we can learn much from the past, but it is what we are doing today that will ultimately carry us into the future."

Careful Hand Laundry and Dry Cleaners receives DOWPER solvent from Dalex Company Limited of Concord, Ontario, Canada. ❖



Are you interested in receiving SPOT NEWS at your e-mail address? Only a few readers have responded to this question so far. If you have been putting off your reply, but you would still like an electronic newsletter delivered promptly to your office, please e-mail us at nmweiss@dow.com with the message, "Yes, I would like to receive SPOT NEWS via e-mail," and include your e-mail address. We are still open to producing an electronic issue of SPOT NEWS in addition to our print edition, if enough people want it.

NOTE: The article "Have You Ever Wondered" on the next page is specially written for your customers. You may want to copy it for use as a handout to your customers.

Have You Ever Wondered...?

... How your drycleaner can get your clothes so clean? How he or she can make them look like new over and over again? Or handle so many different fabrics that require such different care?

There are several answers to that, and the most obvious is that your drycleaner is an experienced expert in garment care.

But there is more to it than that.

One of the best-kept secrets in the drycleaning business is a useful and versatile chemical solvent called perchloroethylene—or “perc” for short. Today, there are a number of alternative products available for cleaning garments, but 80 percent of all drycleaners depend on perc. That’s because perc is a better cleaner than the alternatives, it’s safe to use, and it’s easy on the environment.

Perc is a better cleaner because it is a stronger solvent than the others, removing more kinds of soils and stains, yet it is gentle on fabrics and easy on colors.

And perc is safe. It is non-flammable and non-explosive. In the early days of drycleaning, most everybody used petroleum-based solvents—and used them very carefully to avoid explosions; but when perc became available some 50 years ago, drycleaners were able to breathe easier through use of perc.

More research has been done on the health effects of perc than on almost any other commonly used chemical product. The result? In the quantities that anyone encounters in

drycleaning—either as a drycleaning worker or as a customer—perc has not been found to have any adverse effect on health.

Of course, like all chemicals, perc must be handled with care, but your drycleaner is trained to do this. With his safety procedures and modern drycleaning equipment, he is able to keep the perc in the drycleaning cycle and out of the atmosphere.

With perc, a little goes a long way. Modern drycleaning machines wash your garments in perc, then remove it from the fabric, distill it to remove the soils, and re-use it again and again. And as the technology of drycleaning has improved, the recovery record for perc has improved. Over the past ten years, the average drycleaner has been able to use 70 percent less perc to clean more garments.

Over the past ten years, the average drycleaner has cut his use of perc by 70 percent because of improved drycleaning equipment. The perc stays in the machine—not in your clothes or the environment!

What does this mean for you? It means that the perc stays in the drycleaning machine, where it does the most good—not in your clothes, not in the air of the drycleaning store, and not in the atmosphere, the soil, or the groundwater.

Want to learn more about perc? E-mail your address to the American Council on Science and



For your free copy of “What’s the Story? The Dry-Cleaning Chemical Perc,” e-mail your request along with your address to the ACSH at perc@asch.org.

Health at perc@acsh.org, and ask them to mail you the free brochure “What’s the Story? The Dry-Cleaning Chemical Perc.”

ACSH is an independent, non-profit consortium of physicians and scientists dedicated to consumer education.

(continued from page 7) 2001 Industry Activity Notes

Pollution prevention practices have been maintained, including the requirement for closed-loop delivery of perc.

Canada—In August, Environment Canada released proposed regulations for perc drycleaning for comment by mid-October. Some key elements of the proposal include:

- Phase out of 1st and 2nd generation equipment.

- New equipment must have a solvent mileage rating from the manufacturer of 10 kg solvent /1000 kg clothes cleaned.
- Spill containment and separator water treatment.
- Closed, direct-coupled systems for solvent delivery.

- Disposal of all hazardous waste at appropriate waste management facilities.
- Solvent distributors responsible for record keeping and pick-up of waste.

The regulations could be finalized in early 2002. This will be the culmination of a stakeholder group effort sponsored by Environment Canada which began in 1995. ❖

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