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Carpet Cleaning

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Green Carpet Cleaning

By Mark Warner

The professional cleaning industry goes back centuries. In fact, the word *janitor* derives from the Latin word *janus*, used in ancient Rome to refer to a doorkeeper or building caretaker.

The professional carpet cleaning industry, however, is a rather new industry by comparison. Before World War II, most homes were built with hard surface floors, usually hardwood. People placed rugs over these floors and, when those rugs needed cleaning, they were either "beaten" with specially made rug beaters or taken to a company that specialized in this service to remove dust and gently clean them with soap and water to remove soils.

In the late 1940s, wall-to-wall carpeting became the norm in most homes. At first, shampoo and bonnet cleaning systems, which used a floor buffer and special pads to clean carpets, were the most common way to clean these carpets. (*See sidebar on shampoo and bonnet cleaning.*) At about this same time, the carpet cleaning steamer--what we now refer to as a carpet extractor--had been invented. By the 1960s, steam cleaning carpets with extractors, both truckmount and portable, with or without in-line heaters, had become very popular.

Shampooing is still the most common method used to clean carpets, especially in commercial settings. This is mainly because it does not require the purchase of special and often expensive equipment, it is fairly easy to do, and it allows carpets to dry relatively quickly. However, carpet extraction is becoming the most popular way to clean carpets.



The Americhem 2012 Equipment Rodeo

Thursday, February 23rd -
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The Chemical Component

Just as carpet cleaning practices and equipment evolved throughout the previous century, so too have carpet cleaning chemicals. Before the 20th century, soap and water were just about the only things used to clean everything from counter tops to carpets. Some say it was the development of washing machines in the 1900s that led to the development of the first real cleaning agents and detergents. Researchers found that certain chemical ingredients and combinations of ingredients provided more effective cleaning. As a result, a new and important industry--cleaning chemical manufacturing and development--came to be. This fledgling industry was given a big boost at about the same time when public health experts discovered a direct correlation between inadequate cleaning and the spread of disease.

Cleaning chemicals created specifically for shampoo and bonnet systems were developed as those machines increased in popularity, as did those used in carpet extraction systems. Although these chemicals have become more effective over time and have certainly served us well, we now know that they can be harmful to the environment, building occupants, and the cleaning professionals who use them. Most of the conventional carpet cleaning chemicals still in use today contain such ingredients as:

- hydroxyacetic acid
- d'limonene
- 2-Butoxy Ethanol
- volatile organic compounds (VOCs)
- chemical solvents and odor eliminators

Exposure to these ingredients can cause a variety of health-related problems ranging from dizziness to cancer. These problems are sometimes intensified because the chemicals are not always used properly--typically because users do not understand how dangerous they can be. Often too much chemical is used, adequate protections regarding mixing and pouring are not adhered to, or there is inadequate ventilation when and where carpet cleaning chemicals are mixed and used.

The Green Savior

Over the last 15 years, chemical manufacturers have developed a variety of carpet cleaning agents that are healthier to use. However, as with other Green chemicals, early versions tended to be costly, did not perform as well as conventional products, and might not even have been as Green as they claimed to be.

The work and research for safer, more sustainable carpet cleaning solutions by pioneers in the chemical manufacturing industry led the way in the improvement and acceptance of environmentally preferable carpet cleaning products. Very often this work was done by smaller chemical manufacturers while the major companies sat on the sideline, waiting to see if this "Green thing" would become more than just a fad.

As Green carpet cleaning began to become more main stream, more manufacturers both large and small developed products and even entire product lines designed to reduce the impact of carpet cleaning chemicals on the environment. Bio-enzymatic carpet cleaning chemicals--which use natural ingredients such as enzymes and even bacteria to consume soils and other contaminants before breaking down into carbon dioxide and water after use--have become much more popular as well due to both their effectiveness and their minimal environmental impact.

The Green carpet cleaning movement received another important boost when parameters and certification criteria were developed by such organizations as EcoLogo[™], GreenSeal[®] and the Carpet and Rug Institute (CRI). Although Green carpet cleaning chemicals contain none of the ingredients we now know to be harmful, these products must still be used properly per the manufacturer's instructions in order to protect human health and the environment.

The way chemical is now applied to carpets also can make the process more environmentally responsible. For many years, technicians mixed cleaning agents and water in the extractor's tank. Dilution was not always scientifically preformed and more often than not, more chemical, potentially having a greater impact on the environment, was used than necessary.

However, most technicians now prespray carpets with cleaning agents, working in one manageable area at a time. This allows the chemicals to "dwell" on the carpet, helping to dissolve and loosen soils. This method is also Greener because it typically requires less chemical, reducing the environmental impact.

A Bright Future

As many individuals in the cleaning industry now know, Green cleaning is a journey. We are constantly developing new cleaning methods, products, chemicals, as well as equipment that make cleaning healthier for users, building occupants, and the environment. And carpet cleaning is no exception--the Green carpet cleaning chemicals now available make yesterday's products look primitive by comparison. And if the past is any indication of the future, we can look forward to even more improvements in the years to come.

P&G Pro Line Carpet Care

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A graphic for the 2012 Seminar Series. It features a large, detailed eye with a glowing blue iris and a dark pupil. The eye is set against a dark blue background with faint grid lines and light effects. The text "2012 SEMINAR SERIES" is written in a large, white, sans-serif font to the right of the eye.

An enlightening series of seminars, designed to be educational and informative, as well as entertaining and enjoyable.

The 2012 Americhem Seminar Series Schedule

Provided by The ABD Group in specific locations in the Harrisburg, PA area.

February 23rd - Hands-On Equipment Rodeo & Open House! Try them all... Spin them, Ride them, Learn about them! Contests, Prizes... and more!

March 15th - Award-Winning Disinfection and Decontamination Seminar as presented to the US & Canadian Military, FEMA, Johns Hopkins and others. Presented by Mark Warner

April 20th - MC³ (Managed Commercial Carpet Care) - Covers all critical aspects of commercial carpet care, from job site analysis and costing analysis, to proposal generation and profitability requirements. Presented by John Holibaugh

May 11th - Customer Appreciation Day! Enjoy hotdogs and hamburgers on the Bar-B! Also, enjoy an entertaining day filled with contests and prizes, as well as engaging conversation with members of the Americhem team, as well as key suppliers. A good time is promised for all!

June 15th - Wood Floor Maintenance Program. Covers all aspects of wood floor care and maintenance, including gym floors, retail floors, residential floors, and the new Green floors (bamboo floors, etc.). Presented by Mark Warner, Technical Advisory Committee Chair for the IICRC/Clean Trust Wood Floor Maintenance Technician Certification course.

July 13th - IICRC's CCT Certification Course. CCT is the IICRC's Carpet Care Technician course, and is one of the most popular and highly attended courses offered by the IICRC. Presented by an authorized IICRC/Clean Trust Certified Instructor.

August 9th - LEED Buildings - Audits and Surveys. Covers all aspects of LEED EB certification requirements as outlined in the ISSA CIMS Program, including the identification of benchmarks that indicate the level of Green that a building has achieved.

More to come!

Sign up online at www.americhem.net

Thursday
February 23, 2012



2012
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9:00 AM - 2:00 PM

Come and join us for this phenomenal day, promising to be highly informative, as well as wonderfully entertaining and enjoyable!

February 23, 9 AM – 2 PM - Open House

Americhem's Equipment Rodeo & Open House

Learn about the Leading Edge of Floor Care and Carpet Care Equipment! Learn about new floor machines, new burnishers, new walk-behind autoscrubbers, new ride-on autoscrubbers, new carpet extractors, new low moisture carpet systems, new self-contained washroom cleaning equipment, new warehouse sweepers, new self contained grout cleaning equipment, new leasing programs, and much more!

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2012 AMERICHEM SEMINAR SERIES

presents

The 2012 Americhem Equipment Rodeo
FEBRUARY 23, 2012, 9:00 AM - 2:00 PM Open House
Americhem, 1401 AIP Drive, Middletown, PA 17057

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Thursday
March 15, 2012



2012
SEMINAR
SERIES

9:00 AM - 2:00 PM

Come and join us for this phenomenal seminar, this is a highly educational and informative program, as well as potentially life saving.

March 15th, 9 AM – 2 PM

Disinfection & Decontamination Seminar

Learn about the leading edge of disinfection and decontamination programs! Witness the award-winning program as presented to the US Military, the Canadian Military, FEMA, the US Senate, world-famous hospitals, etc. Learn about the DEFCON Environmental & Infectious Disease Threat Ranking System for proper development of housekeeping programs! Learn about the 3 dimensional approach to effectively neutralize outbreaks! Learn about Pandemic Preparedness program development! Learn about ATP meters and other tools for monitoring the effectiveness of the disinfectants and sanitizers, as well as the existing cleaning procedures! Presented by Mark Warner.

\$29.95 per person!

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2012 AMERICHEM SEMINAR SERIES

presents

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March 15, 2012, 9:00 AM - 2:00 PM

Sheraton Harrisburg/Hershey, 4650 Lindle Road, Harrisburg, PA

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Directions:

Eisenhower Blvd: proceed south, past Angie's Diner to next red light, turn left on Fulling Mill Rd., continue straight through red light at Rt. 441 to Phillips Office Supply warehouse, turn left on AIP drive, go past Hershey Creamery on right, Americhem is on left at next intersection, Kreider Dr. & AIP Dr.

Rt. 441 South: from Eisenhower Blvd & I-283, proceed south on Rt. 441 (Lindle Rd. then Oberlin Rd) just before red light at Fulling Mill Rd. and Souders convenience store, turn left on Kreider Dr., go straight, Americhem is on left at intersection with AIP Dr.

Rt. I-283 East: take airport exit, immediately exit to right lane, at top of ramp turn left at stop sign, cross over airport connector, turn left on Rt. 441 North, proceed to red light at Fulling Mill Rd., go straight through, turn right on Kreider Dr., go straight, Americhem is on left at intersection with AIP Dr.

Rt. I-283 West: take Middletown-N.Union St.exit, at end of ramp turn right, at red light at Fulling Mill Rd. turn left, turn right on AIP Dr., just past Phillips Office Supply warehouse, go past Hershey Creamery on right, Americhem is on left at intersection with Kreider Dr.

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