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A celebration of rededication

Milt & Edie's Drycleaners & Tailoring Center celebrated three decades of serving Burbank and Southern California with a rededication ribbon cutting ceremony this spring.

Originally named Milt & Michael's when it opened in 1988, it was renamed Milt & Edie's by owner Milt Chortkoff in 2004 in honor of his wife, Edie. The 30th anniversary event was attended by members of the Burbank Chamber of Commerce, government officials and customers.

"This was a milestone occasion offering us an opportunity to let our customers and community know we are continuing our commitment to providing superior service and quality cleaning and tailoring," said Beth Shader, who runs the family business with her husband, Michael Shader, and her mother.

Although Milt passed away last December, Beth said he was very involved in the early planning stages of the anniversary event.

"Dad loved a reason to celebrate and this was a big deal, especially for a business with the motto, 'All customers leave happy... always!'"

Milt & Edie's enlisted the Burbank Chamber of Commerce to help coordinate the "ribbon cutting" portion of the event.

"Chris Hunter at the chamber contacted our state and local government officials and chamber members and even managed to find a ribbon that matched



Edie Chortkoff and Beth Shader handle the ribbon-cutting scissors while a host of local dignitaries look on at the rededication of Milt & Edie's in Burbank, CA. It was the 30th anniversary of the founding of the company by Milt Chortkoff, who passed away late last year.

our signature magenta color," said Michael Shader.

Citations and proclamations were presented by representatives of California Senator Anthony Portantino, Assemblymember Laura Friedman, Los Angeles County Supervisor Katherine Barger, and the City of Burbank.

Everyone in attendance enjoyed free refreshments from local restaurant favorite Porto's and all were encouraged to spin the Milt & Edie's "Wheel of Rewards" to win up to \$100 in free services.

Michael said the Wheel of Rewards comes out throughout the year and encourages everyone to "join us on Face-

book because that is where we give some advance notice of when the Wheel will be spinning."

"Thirty years of love and dedication have made Milt & Edie's what it is today and seeing everyone here supporting us was wonderful," said Edie. "Milt would have loved it!"

SEFA's show takes time to honor Buster Bell's service to the industry

The South Eastern Fabricare Association took its biennial trade show to Birmingham, AL, last month with positive results. Fifty-seven companies exhibited their offerings in the Birmingham-Jefferson Convention Complex for three days, giving the approximate 400 registered attendees plenty of options to consider for improving their businesses while a slate of speakers on topics ranging from social media and customer service to how to find good employees provided a wealth of ideas to the same end. Adding to that were several clinics during the afternoons on the exhibit hall floor with demonstrations and tutorials on shirt finishing and stain removal.

There was even a tour of the M&B Hangers factory in nearby Leeds, AL, for a chance to see how the most common product in the industry is manufactured.

A highlight of the weekend was the presentation to Buster Bell of the Drycleaning and Laundry Institute's Diamond Achievement award, an honor accorded to just six other individuals.

Bell joined the family business, Bell Laundry and Cleaners in Spartanburg, SC, in 1954 and has always been inquisitive

about new methods and technologies for garment care.

In making the presentation, DLI President Mike Nesbit said, "He knows stuff about what is going on before we do."

Beyond that, Bell is always willing to share what he knows and to try to help other cleaners and the industry as a whole.

"If you called him today and said 'I've got a problem in my cleaning plant', he'd be on his way to come help," Nesbit said. "Every day you can pick up the phone and learn something from Buster Bell."

"He has a passion for this business," Nesbit added. "He's not doing this to make dollars. He's doing it to make our business better because he loves this business."

The award presentation was one of Nesbit's last official acts as DLI president. During the weekend he turned over the gavel to new president Leland Waite of Waite's Cleaners in Mobile, AL. Two new directors also began four-year terms on the board: Mark Pollock of Signature Cleaners in Doylestown, PA as District 2 director and James Shepherd of the Cleaners of Ruston in Ruston, LA as District 6 director. (See the full board line-up on page 14.)



Buster Bell (left) receives DLI's top honor, the Diamond Achievement award, from DLI president Mike Nesbit.



Sneak Peek

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Deborah Rechnitz warns that tried and true industry benchmarks may no longer apply to a changing industry.



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Paperless manifests for routes are much improved but still not without their pitfalls as James Peuster observes.



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Miscalculating labor costs can lead to bad decisions that kill efficiency and your bottom line, says Don Desrosiers.



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It can bring production to a halt. Bruce Grossman discusses how to prevent it and offers a stop-gap work around if it happens.





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PO Box 340
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Phone: (215) 830-8467
Fax: (215) 830-8490
info@nataclo.com
Web: www.nataclo.com

PUBLISHER
Carol Memberg

EDITOR
Hal Horning

CONTRIBUTING WRITER
Chris Pollay

MANAGING DIRECTOR
Leslie Schaeffer

ADVERTISING
Richard Cappel

GRAPHIC DESIGN
Mary Castro-Regan

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Minimizing customer service problems

One of the biggest problems of being a part of a customer service industry is that one bad transaction can instantly offset the previous seamless thousand ones. Think about the recent Starbucks’ debacle. The Seattle-based coffee chain has well over 27,000 locations around the world and the company has become synonymous with excellent customer service for many years, but when two black men were arrested at a Philadelphia location following the call of an employee, it eventually created a backlash heard around the world in the form of social media boycotts and in-store protests.

The actions of one employee lead to a PR disaster of the highest order. Whether you love Starbucks or hate them, it’s hard to deny that the company didn’t try to do whatever it could to rectify the situation. They closed more than 8,000 U.S. stores on the same day to conduct racial-bias training for over 175,000 employees, estimated to cost the chain about \$12 million in profits. You can bet they will rethink employee training in the future to make sure such a costly incident never happens again.

The lesson from all of this is that time is of the essence when dealing with customer service issues. The longer it takes to resolve a problem, the angrier the customer becomes and the louder they yell. Don’t give a tiny spark time to grow into a huge conflagration. True, some customers are always crazy and almost impossible to deal with, but some are quite rational for a time until they reach a breaking point where the only way they can vent their frustration is to tell everybody they know (and even complete strangers) how the company that wronged them is the worst ever.

Hopefully you can avoid that scenario. The trick is to remember you are dealing with a less-than-rational version of the customer whenever a problem arises. Train your CSRs to remain calm, listen attentively (without interruption), apologize gracefully and respond sympathetically. It’s the part of the job that your staff cannot afford to take personally. It is highly stressful and difficult and the best thing they can do is to respond quickly with a possible solution.

Again, that’s where the training comes in. The worst thing a customer can hear is that the CSR is unauthorized to take any action. Empowering a counter person with the ability to use their discretion for refunds or other creative solutions goes a long, long way in minimizing the damage to the customer’s trust. At the very least, make sure you or a manager is accessible so they can contact a person who can rectify the situation as soon as possible. Every interaction counts. The more people they have to talk to about their problem, the longer they have to wait, the bigger the problem becomes. Now, they aren’t just mad about a damaged garment, but about losing more precious time and feeling betrayed by a company they once loved.

Surviving the summer heat

Nobody should be so foolish as to ask someone working in a drycleaning plant on a hot summer day, “Is it hot enough for you?” When it’s hot and humid outside, you can be sure it is even hotter and more humid in the plant. Stepping outside into the 90° air can seem like relief.

Drycleaning plants are notoriously hot and steamy and every drycleaner has some strategies to cope with the heat. Some have gone so far as to aircondition the entire plant. It’s a big expense, to be sure, but those who have taken that step say that it’s worth it in the payoff of comfort and better productivity.

But there are other approaches. Area fans won’t cool the air but at least keep it moving. Exhaust fans can be placed to draw hot air out and away from the work area. When combined with area fans or spot cooling equipment, the plant can at least be made bearable.

Whatever strategy you use, it’s still important to be aware of and monitor the problems that face overheated workers in the plant. The signs of “heat illness” can take several forms — from heat cramps to heat exhaustion and life-threatening heat stroke.

Heat cramps are muscle pains caused by the loss of body salts and fluid during sweating and can be abated by drinking water and/or carbohydrate-electrolyte replacement liquids (e.g., sports drinks) every 15 to 20 minutes.

A worker suffering heat exhaustion — headache, nausea, dizziness, weakness, irritability, confusion, thirst, heavy sweating and a high body temperature — should be removed from the hot area and given liquids to drink and cold compresses to the head, neck, and face.

Heat stroke, the most serious heat-related problem, occurs when the body’s temperature regulating system fails and body temperature rises to critical levels. Signs of heat stroke are confusion, loss of consciousness and seizures. Workers experiencing heat stroke have a very high body temperature and may stop sweating. This requires immediate medical attention!

We can’t avoid the heat, but we know how to deal with it.

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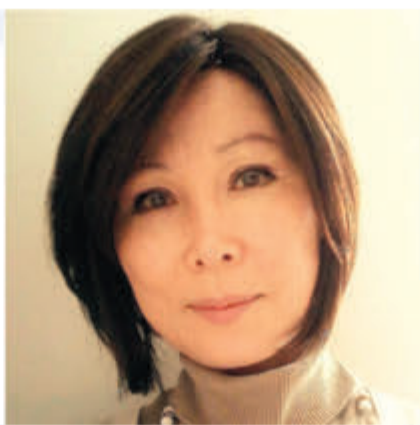


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Kang@NIEinsurance.com



Ann Hawkins
Vice President
Hawkins@NIEinsurance.com

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The last frontier

As J.T. and Katie Hampton can attest as third generation owners of Fireweed Cleaners in Anchorage, being a drycleaner in the last frontier is a little bit different than in the contiguous United States.

For starters, residential pickup and delivery routes can be darn near impossible in the winter, which is a big reason why the company doesn't offer the service right now.

"I have been super gung-ho about starting routes," J.T. explained, "but after careful consideration and strategic planning, I'm not sure residential routes are very realistic. They are a logistical nightmare."

During the winter months, the average temperature is frequently below freezing and the total snowfall for the year can exceed 100 inches.

The city shuts down so much during December, January and February that for the past two years the Hamptons have actually built their own skating rink in their yard.

"We froze our backyard so we could skate on it because Katie and I both play hockey," J.T. laughed. "It's a lot of work especially when it snows 12 to 18 inches and you have to go clean it off after a long day of work."

It isn't just the weather that can complicate life for a plant owner; having key equipment parts delivered can take longer and cost much more.

"We have to evaluate the cost of it and how we're going to get it up here... what's the most cost-effective," J.T. noted. "I really needed a part a couple of weeks ago and I think the part was \$100 and shipping was \$148. It was just ridiculous."

"You kind of have to plan and keep certain parts in stock and keep your machines running right," he added.

Shipping new parts in might not even be the hardest thing; even a solvent as common as perc can be hard to obtain.

"It's becoming more and more taxing and difficult to get it," J.T. explained. "Distributors kept dropping off the map which pushed them further and further away from our distribution hub, which is in Washington."

Then, there's proper disposal. The Hamptons estimate that the cost to meet regulations to ship used perc for both locations out of the state cost them thousands a year, which is a large reason why they made the switch to K4 in 2016. So far they have replaced two Vic perc machines for new K4 ones and plan to do the same with the third when it is no longer viable.

"K4 is really easy to get here. It's really easy to dispose of. The local landfill hazardous waste will take it," J.T. said.

It also doesn't hurt that the Hamptons only live about two miles away from Chris White, the technical sales director for Kreussler for the western United States and Canada.

"He's been a great resource and super helpful with questions and getting to know the solvent and how it's used, interacting with the machine, etc." J.T. added. "It worked out well. It was really surprising that he was based out of Anchorage."

Long ago — over 50 years, in fact — Katie's grandparents were more inter-

ested in the advantages Anchorage had to offer when contemplating opening a store there. Gerald and Helen Earp liked that there was little competition at the time, so the couple moved from Monmouth, IL, and soon started Fireweed.

Just in case you are a history fan and wondering about their last name... yes, there is a connection to the famous old west lawman with the same surname who was born in Monmouth.

she met J.T. who had known he wanted to be an entrepreneur for a long time.

"Ever since I was about ten, I always had my own business, starting with mowing lawns. I had that until I was 16, I think," he recalled. "I got a job at a golf course. That was pretty cool. When I was in college, I started another lawn mowing company."

At CSU, J.T. studied Business Administration and took part in the early days of a new program at the college

more as a small town, especially when it comes to word-of-mouth.

"Word gets around pretty quickly about what's going on and who's good at this or that, etc." J.T. explained. "So, one thing we've always done is take care of people."

The 50-year-old family business has earned a few honors over the years for such efforts, including a Gold Pan Award in 2008 for entrepre-



J.T. and Katie Hampton

"Wyatt Earp's father and my dad's great-great grandfather were brothers," Katie indicated.

While Gerald found sales work for Alaska Oil, Helen did anything that was needed — counter work, pressing, cleaning — to help make Fireweed a success.

"My grandmother was just a very smart lady, and driven and very kind," Katie recalled. "She pretty much manned the whole thing. I remember my dad telling me stories of how she would go and work Sundays and maybe vacuum up the lobby to make it look nice. She would catch him sleeping under the counter because he was not doing his work."

Randy Earp may have slept at the shop from time to time, but he never intended to take over the family business someday. However, after working for a plumbing company he realized he wanted to be his own boss.

"He had worked there enough to know what he needed to do and what changes needed to be made to make it more for the times," Katie noted.

So, in the early to mid-1990s, Helen was ready to retire and Randy began the process of updating and modernizing the business.

As a result, young Katie spent enough time at the shop to know that she also didn't want to pursue a career there one day.

"I remember if we had to stay home sick from school, we had a TV in the office upstairs at work and we would bring blankets and push chairs together and make a nest and that's where we stayed while mom worked. I remember waiting on customers before I could even see over the counter," she laughed. "Growing up, I always said, 'I am NEVER going to work here' because I was here so often."

After high school, Katie left home to attend Colorado State University where

that emphasized entrepreneurship. The couple never really talked about their plans for after graduation.

"It was like an unspoken conversation that we had that after we graduated we were moving to Alaska and taking over the cleaners," Katie said.

The plan was to slowly learn the business from Randy and ease into succession. Then, something horrible happened that changed everything.

"We got married in August of 2010 and we had just really started to work at the cleaners," J.T. noted. "A month later to the day, Randy was in Arizona and had purchased a new motorcycle and was driving it home and got into a really bad accident that put him in the hospital for a month. For the first week, I don't think we could even talk to him."

There was no time for training wheels. With nobody else to run or oversee the business, the only other option was to step up.

"From September 4th until right before Thanksgiving, we had to learn how to run the show very quickly," J.T. said. "We were up here trying to figure it out and keep things running. We were really very green. We did not know very much about the operational back side at all, but we figured it out."

It hasn't been an ideal training situation, but J.T. enjoys that the drycleaning industry is anything but boring.

"I come home and complain, I'll be honest, but I couldn't see myself doing anything else right now knowing this opportunity is available to me because every day is different and that really fits my personality well," he said. "I go to work and I could be doing production. I could be helping with customers. I could do drycleaning or spotting or working on a piece of equipment or brainstorming a new idea."

Though Anchorage has a population close to 300,000, the Hamptons see it

neural excellence and a strong commitment to community service, and more recently they won the 2018 Family Business of the Year by the Small Business Administration's Alaska Division.

A large reason for their recognition is the company's Coats for Kids program, which is over 15 years old. It collects a thousand warm garments a year for those who really need them.

In some aspects, they face the same problems and issues as any cleaners in the lower 48 states. In fact, a vast majority of Fireweed's work is for professional attire from the city's many oil executives. Like many other cleaners though, they have had to tighten belts of late.

"Things have gotten a little tighter because a lot of our state relies on the oil industry," J.T. noted. "There have been changes in the oil industry lately such as companies exiting exploration or development, etc. For instance, one of BP's main offices is right down the road from us, so if those executives aren't there, they're not going to get their clothes cleaned."

Still, the Hamptons feel confident about Fireweed's future and hope to keep finding new ways to be more convenient to customers. In the meantime, they'll just keep dealing with some of the crazier quirks that comes with being a cleaners in Anchorage, like bizarre crimes that defy explanation: this winter, J.T. got a call at 2 a.m. that Fireweed's alarm went off. Somebody tried to break in through a laminate window. They failed, but he had to board up the hole to avoid everything freezing inside. Then, a month later, they tried again.

"This time they got all the way in," he said. "They didn't steal anything but a handful of candy that we had on our counter. They left a trail of candy and broken glass out the window."

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~Kurt and Drew Skasik, Skasik's Quality Dry Cleaners

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~Craig Ford, Owner/Operator, SeaBreeze Cleaners

"I've been in the drycleaning business for 28 years, always using perc. I have been searching for an alternative solvent for the past two years. After researching Sensene, visiting plants running with Sensene for the past few months, it has been beyond my wildest expectations. It's better than perc! As the owner of Ruthie's Cleaners, Owasso, MI, I am a hands-on operator and the one that has always done the cleaning. This solvent is just phenomenal. This is my second Columbia machine. In 23 years Columbia has always been the leading company in technology and my new Columbia is a testament to that fact."



~Robert Marks, Ruthie's Cleaners

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STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT



BY DEBORAH RECHNITZ

Industry best practices must change

Several of my recent articles have discussed the industry disrupters along with those pioneers who continue to test new business models for this industry.

Why is it useful to focus on these unproven and sometimes even untried scenarios?

This is an industry in a state of transition. No denying it. Drycleaning pieces are falling. Competition in areas of growing population is still increasing. Marketing is in a whole new world. Recent headlines have even claimed that the industry is “dying!”

With this state of affairs, change is inevitable. It also means that with new, out-of-industry competitors, new priorities from our youngest customers, and even new and growing product lines, the historical standard operating methods and procedures may no longer be valid or may, at the very least, lose their degree of importance that we have relied upon for so long.

Historical best practices

There are some well established and very successful “best practices” used in this industry. They are tried and true. Managing to these best practices has allowed us to meet financial and operational benchmarks which ultimately translate to strong profit performance.

There are established best practices for building route sales, managing daily produc-

tive labor, scheduling counter staff, direct mail promotions, and even paying claims. These best practices are based on established and proven systems

the garment mix has raised the achievable standard without compromising quality. Operators who have recognized the opportunities and reinvested

wash-and-fold as a significant product line? I may have a lot of socks and no drycleaning. Tracking total pieces looks very impressive, but my rev-

As this product line grows, it deserves its own management, tracking, recording and ultimately the establishment of standards based on the types of equipment available along with the packaging and movement methodology being utilized. With this approach its profitability will continue to improve.

Managing to best practices has been very good for this industry. Understanding established approaches that consistently deliver results is, in many ways, what has enabled the best in the industry to grow and flourish during the past 30 years.

When an effective approach, based on an established set of best practices, is introduced it enables scale, predictability, and consistency. If we figure out the right way to do something in a particular situation, it should work again in a similar store, route or plant.

However, retaining historical best practices while the industry is reinvesting and redefining itself is a recipe for failure. Being so worried about a loss in piece count that forces discounting rather than growth in new areas may foretell future failure.

There are new and evolving standards, nearly by the day. There are the beginning of benchmarks for social media marketing results, for wash-dry-fold production standards, and for customer service staffing.

Those operators who have constantly moved their benchmarks to higher levels as opportunities arise are well equipped to build new ones, modify the old ones and continue to prosper.

Be alert, be aware, continue to question everything today about your business. Assume nothing is stagnant. See the evolution and embrace it. Plan to move forward without failing.

Deborah Rechnitz has been an independent management consultant in the drycleaning industry since 1980. She also was chief operating officer of one of the largest USA drycleaning operations in 2008. She holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Finance and Personnel Administration; a Bachelor of Arts degree in Interpersonal Communications; and an MBA in Operations Management from Case Western Reserve University. She can be reached by e-mail at drechnitz@gmail.com or phone at (253) 405-7043.

Retaining historical best practices while the industry is reinvesting and redefining itself is a recipe for failure.

and procedures, but what was once true has evolved and moved on. Relying solely on old benchmarks is dangerous to profits and is proving to be non-competitive.

One current example is drycleaning productivity. Generally, it is measured by pieces per operator hour, with hours, in this example including the cleaner, spotter, presser, inspector and assembly.

The benchmark, in the not so recent past, used to be ten to 12 pieces per operator hour (total drycleaning pieces processed divided by total hours worked). It leapt to 16 and then it moved to 18. Now it exceeds 22 pieces per operator hour.

For those operators still relying on an old industry standard of 16 pieces per hour, they are found to be less profitable than their competitors and feeling price pressures in the marketplace to maintain historical profitability.

The installation of new technology along with changes in

in their business have also reaped the rewards in lower labor costs, which becomes even more critical today where good employees are hard to find and more expensive than ever.

As the industry continues to move in new directions, additional benchmarks may be losing their validity. Historically, piece count increases, on same store sales, were expected to be a minimum of three percent with annual price increases of three percent providing a minimum revenue growth of six percent.

Wow! Where did that go?

Now we see achievable goals very differently. One wedding dress at \$600 is the equivalent to 100 pairs of pants at \$6 per piece. So, on a very simple level, piece count may have fallen by 100 times, but revenue remains the same. Not all bad, and it displays the danger of being overly concerned with piece count growth. Today, it is much more about revenue than piece count.

What happens when I add

enue per piece has been cut in half. Is that bad? Not necessarily if I have doubled my productivity and lowered my operating costs compared to the drycleaning process.

At the end of the day, profitability may be very similar.

New benchmarks

Today, the expanding closet approach is fast becoming a new standard. Everything can come out of the home including the household, the bed linens, the washing and the drycleaning. The new benchmark to track, focus on and manage to is now about revenue per person or per household, not revenue per piece. Our point of sale systems will have to expand their features to accommodate our growing diversity.

Productivity was always measured with two separate product lines — drycleaning and shirts. Laundry was considered “miscellaneous” and labor was often borrowed from other departments.

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NORTHEAST

NEFA plans return to Plymouth for Fall Fest '18

The North East Fabricare Association will be making a return trip to Hotel 1620 in Plymouth, MA, for its annual Fall Fest event. It is scheduled to take from Oct. 26 to 28.

The Fall Fest Management Conference and Tabletop Convention will follow in the footsteps

of past offerings by tapping expert speakers from all over to cover topics that are relevant for today's drycleaners who wish to find new ways to grow their businesses.

Look for announcements in the near future on who will be speaking and what specific topics will be covered; however there will be

an interactive luncheon with industry experts and a "Spotlight on the Industry" session featuring an innovative drycleaning company sharing their experiences.

"This is an exciting program," said NEFA President Larry Fish. "We have really brought in very talented, knowledgeable speakers — and couple that with some terrific opportunities to learn from our vendors and peers — to make this an incredible opportunity for everyone. I get excited every year about the program, and I think this may be our strongest program yet. I am looking forward to attending and bringing my key staff."

Other highlights of the event will include all the latest drycleaning offerings and services at the Allied Trades tabletop exhibits, giving attendees a chance to speak one-on-one with vendors, as well as network with their peers.

Social events such as NEFA's Silent Auction and Cocktail Reception will also be a great place to connect with other cleaners while having a good time.

As for the site of the event, the 1620 Plymouth Harbor Hotel is located across the street from the

bay.

"We are excited about returning to this venue," noted Fish. "It is a great hotel — and a fun town to spend a weekend in. Plymouth is a gorgeous place to be in October, and the town does a really good job of highlighting the Thanksgiving season."

NEFA has arranged for a spe-

cial rate during the proceedings of its Fall Fest. Attendees pay only \$159 per night. Registration details will be made available by the association soon.

For more information on NEFA's Fall Fest, contact the association directly by calling (603) 635-0322 or visit them at www.nefabricare.com.



ECO-COMMUNITY CLEANERS in New York, NY, installed a Hi-Steam SAM 451 multi-garment finisher and a PAM-510P pants topper. Pictured from left are Eric Seo of Hi-Steam and Martin, the store manager.



PRESTIGE CLEANERS in Suffern, NY, installed an InnoClean drycleaning machine. Pictured from left Peter Kim and Kim Chul, both from InnoClean, with Choi Seok-yoon and his wife, owners of Prestige Cleaners.

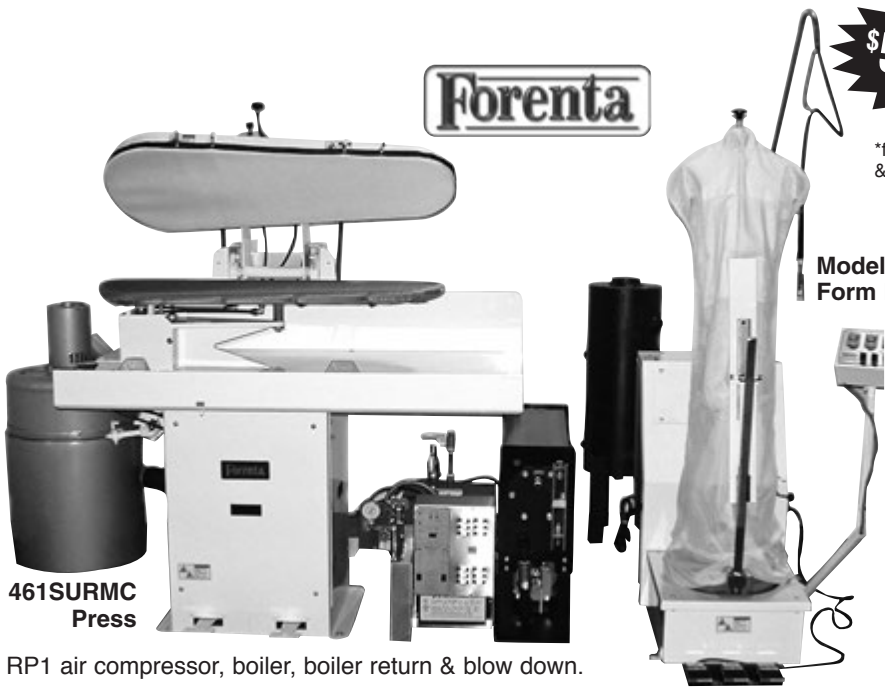
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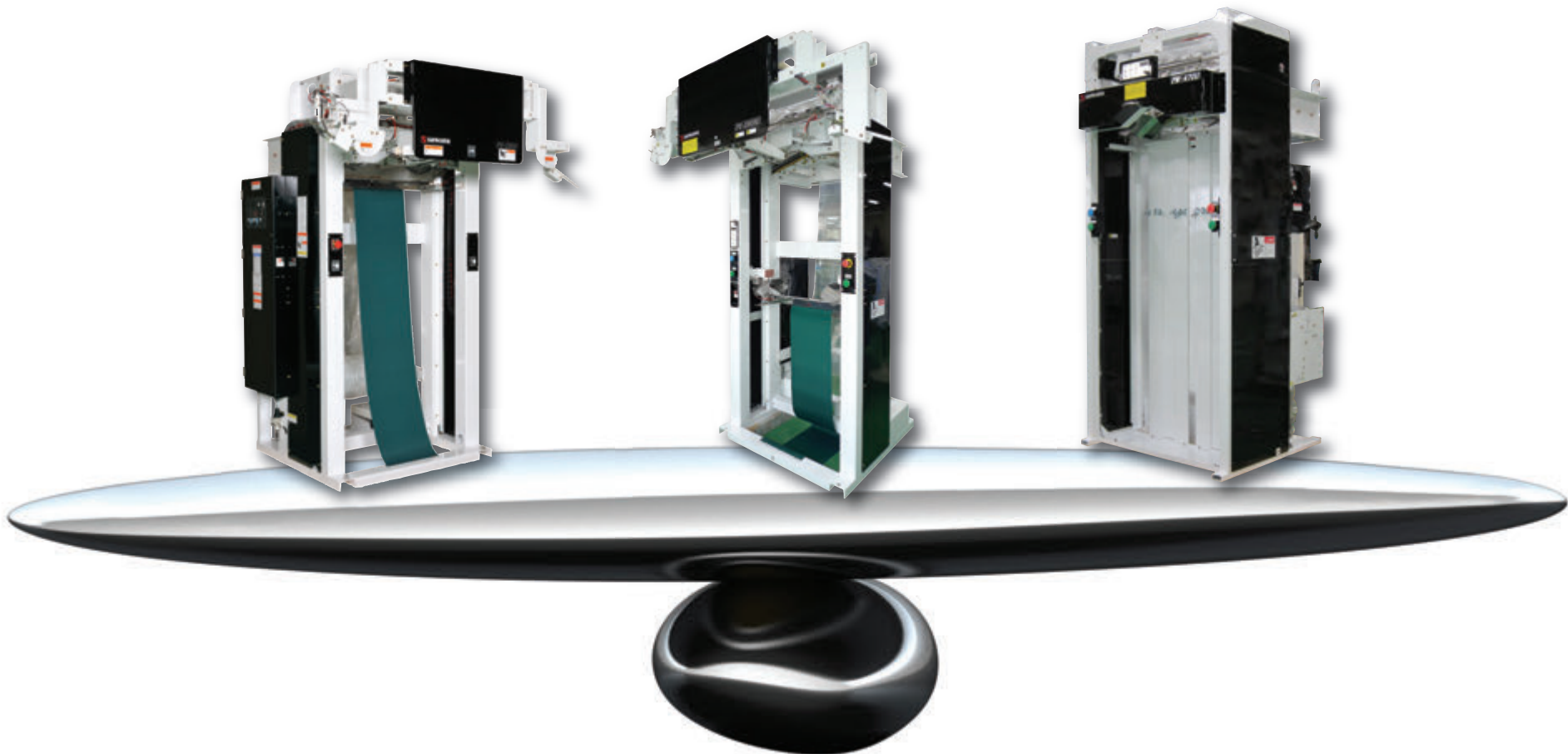


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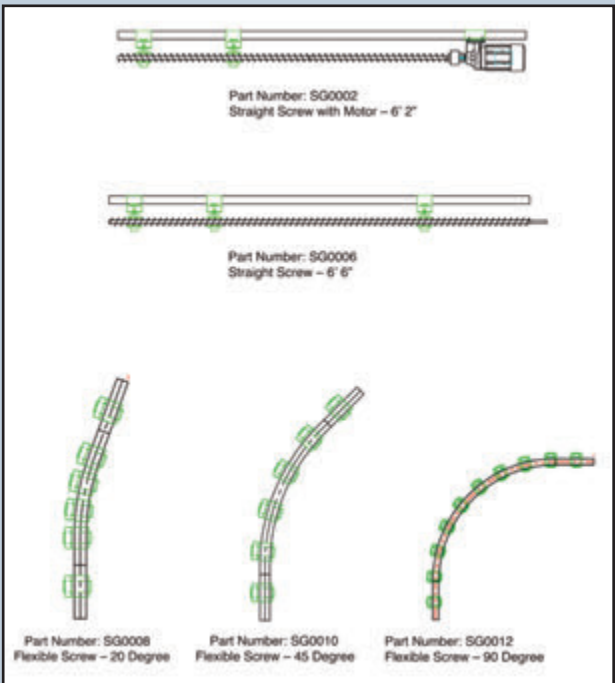
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THE ROUTE PRO



BY JAMES PEUSTER

Cautions on paperless manifests

Several years ago, I was chirping about how the POS systems really needed to step into the 21st century with a paperless manifest that drivers could use to eliminate the antiquated paper form.

The benefits of using your phone or device to run the route would make you believe that it exceeds the old paper, pen and clipboard.

Once I saw SMRT, Starchup and Spot's versions in place, I performed numerous cartwheels as I saw an improvement in customer service, accuracy and driver convenience.

Also, anyone can run the route now with the GPS, drive-by-drive versions that make back-up driver solutions so much easier.

While I still get excited about a paperless manifest, there are many things you need to be aware of.

One report came out that pedestrian fatalities are up nearly 50 percent in the last five years, mainly do to the driver texting or looking at a

phone.

While a driver may look at a manifest while driving, using a device can be a distraction while performing route operations. We know of drivers hitting a few more cars and other

as he often compared the phones choices of turning versus his own. He tended to miss more turns and admitted to running a stop light.

Another driver I rode with admitted to swerving more to

If drivers solely rely on turn-by-turn instructions, they will have a tough time learning the route and keeping the route optimized.

I always challenge route drivers to remove the GPS

with eyes forward than to be having the phone in your hand.

5. Monitor complaints.

It's better to be safe than sorry if people are calling about erratic driving.

While a driver may look at a manifest while driving, using a device can be a distraction while performing route operations.

objects due to performing the steps necessary to go from stop to stop.

This is why it is so important to have the phone mounted on the dash or by the upper section of the windshield so that it is more hands-free for the driver.

I recently rode with two different drivers who were ultra cautious using the phone while doing the route. I could tell they were disciplined to not hold the phone while driving.

One of them even admitted to being distracted by the GPS

catch up with his paperless manifest.

As we have discussed before, the extra steps some programs require takes the driver longer to perform the route than the old paper manifest. It's a trade off when it comes to an experienced driver versus a newbie.

My point of view is simply this: While technology is designed to make our lives easier, the human element is always there. The quicker the driver learns the route and territory, the more efficient route operations are.

from the equation and run the route on their own. Oftentimes they get it done quicker by route memorization and the multi-stops at one location log jam.

So what should you do? I have these suggestions moving forward with the paperless manifest.

1. Challenge drivers to not use the paperless turn-by-turn directions on every stop.

This way they can skip the extra steps going to each customer.

2. Purchase the magnets that clip the phone/device to the dashboard.

This allows for easy removal when needed, but keeps the device in front of the driver.

3. Do a ride-along to see how often the driver is moving and looking at the device.

The habit created will be tough to overcome and may provide you with the opportunity to coach them on how to go hands-free.

4. Purchase Bluetooth headsets for drivers.

It's better to be listening

6. Be careful.

Some states give tickets for having the device in your hand while driving. Know the laws.

7. Determine if the extra customer service steps are necessary.

This may save time and accidents.

The bottom line is to listen to drivers and their concerns, complaints and feedback. Some drivers love the manifest while others love the paperless version.

See for yourself as an owner or manager in the field. While I love the paperless manifest functions, I am also concerned about accidents. Again, educate and monitor the driver's habits.

James Peuster is a consultant who specializes in route development, management and maintenance. He offers onsite consulting as well as ongoing coaching across the country. He also has cost groups to monitor route efficiency. For more information, call him at (816) 739-2066 or visit his website at www.theroutepro.com.

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STENA CLEANERS in Loudenville, NY, had a Unipress Hurricane HS-2 double buck shirt unit installed by Bob Aldrich of Aldrich Clean-Tech in Worcester, MA. Bill Kahan (left) of Unipress is pictured with Erica and Rizzo Haxhillari.

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NCA, DLI planning winter conference in St. Maarten

The Sonesta Ocean Point Resort in St. Maarten will be the site of the next Brainstorming/Five Stars conference sponsored by the National Cleaners Association and the Drycleaning and Laundry Institute.

Planned for Jan. 17-20, the conference gives cleaners a mid-winter break and time to gather and network while hearing from top speakers.

Speakers lined up include keynote John DiJulius, who will

tell how to attract and retain millennial employees and clients, and Arthur Greeno, who will explain the secret to Chick Fil-A's success.

DiJulius, who spoke at the conference in 2015, is the author of *Secret Service*, *Hidden Systems that Deliver Unforgettable Customer Service*, and *What's the Secret?* At this conference, he will share insights and answers to the key questions about attracting and retaining millennial employees and clients, a challenge he has been studying for some time.

Greeno is a long-time Chick Fil-A employee turned owner and is the author of two best-selling books, *Dysfunctional Inspiration* and *Breaking Conformity*. He will discuss the fast food brand's success during his Sunday morning program. He will give his best tips for attracting media exposure and connecting with clients and employees in creative ways.

The venue is a boutique, all-inclusive resort that lends itself to connecting everyone. All rooms have an ocean view.

Room rates for two people double occupancy range from \$500 to \$760 per night.

There are only 129 rooms on the property so early sign-ups are encouraged.

For more information, call Ann Hargrove at NCA, (800) 888-1622 or (708) 205-7611 or email annhargrove252@gamil.com.

Leland Waite begins term as DLI president; new board members installed



The new Drycleaning and Laundry Institute board of directors was installed at DLI's annual meeting during SEFA's Southern Drycleaners and Launderers Show in June. The executive committee in the front row consists of (from left) Jess Culpepper, treasurer. Mike Nesbit, chairman, Leland Waite, president, and Dennis Schmitt, president-elect. In the second row are John Jordan, allied trades director, Hilary Taylor, District 7 DCM, Kathy Benzinger, District 1 DCM, Jeff Schwegmann District 4 director, and Ray Kroner, District 4 DCM. In the third row are Mark Watkins, District 3 DCM, Perry Bullard, District 3 director, Mark Pollock, District 2 director, James Shepherd, District 6 director, Bill Odorizzi, allied trades DCM and Ed Longanecker, District 5 DCM. In back are Joe Blaha, allied trades director, Bobby Patel, District 8 director, and Richard Thum, District 6 DCM.

Obituary

Al Lage

Columbia Drycleaning Machines

Alphonse "Al" G. Lage, former owner of Columbia Drycleaning Inc. in West Babylon, NY, died May 24. He was 87.

A U.S. Air Force veteran of the Korean War, he founded Columbia in the 1980s. Under his leadership, the company introduced the roto disc spin filter, the automatic still clean-out "bipot," the "ground guard" spillage pan, the fifth-generation Turbo Dri machine and the first closed-loop hydrocarbon machine.



He was also active in his community and in 2012 was presented the Man of the Year award by the Merrick, NY, Chamber of Commerce.

Carmela, his wife of more the 60 years, received the Chamber's Woman of the Year award in 1995. The couple was active in United Cerebral Palsy of Nassau County and served on its board. The not-for-profit health agency serves more than 1,800 children and adults with cerebral palsy, developmental and other disabilities.

Lage was also a founding member of the Merrick's annual fall festival.

In addition to his wife, he is survived by a son, John, a daughter, Michelle, four grandchildren and a great-grandson.

Military honors preceded a funeral Mass at Sacred Heart Church in Merrick.

Memorial donations to United Cerebral Palsy Association of Nassau County Inc., 380 Washington Ave., Roosevelt, NY 11575-1899 are appreciated.

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InnoClean is the proud result of KTE's dedicated R&D efforts on wet and eco-friendly solvent cleaning machines. KTE is a world-class dry cleaning equipment manufacturer from South Korea

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InnoClean is Innovation!

The 5 year soft mount parts warranty is part of InnoClean's and KTE's total commitment to the highest quality, dependability, and reliability. Warranty applies only to original parts manufactured and installed by InnoClean with defects in materials or workmanship under normal use & maintenance.



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MIDATLANTIC



A1 CLEANERS in Dover, DE, installed a UniSec 60-lb. cleaning machine. Pictured are Shunli Lou (left), the owner and Robert Lee of New York Machinery.

DLI presents introductory and advanced drycleaning

The Drycleaning and Laundry Institute will do its part to educate students on both basic and advanced principles in drycleaning.

During the week of July 16 to 23, DLI will host an offering of its Introduction to Drycleaning course at its School of Drycleaning Technology located in Laurel, MD.

The curriculum is designed for those new to the industry with less than one year of production experience and will cover a lot of ground: sorting loads, drycleaning science, fibers and their charac-

teristics, cleaning silk, satin and other fabrics, soil and cleaning theory, how to operate a drycleaning machine, stain removal chemistry and procedures, pressing pants, coats and skirts and using tensioning equipment.

Tuition is \$1,095 for DLI members and \$1,449 for non-members. There are additional discounts for two or more attendees from the same member company.

Those who finish the introductory course will be qualified to take the ten-day advanced one that

is suitable for those with more production experience. It will take place from July 23 to Aug. 3.

It covers some of the same topics as the first class, though more in-depth, plus other subjects such as: fiber identification through burn testing, maintaining and changing filters, distillation procedures, troubleshooting problems with the drycleaning machine, customer service techniques, understanding the differences between solvents including K4, GreenEarth, perc and hydrocarbon, pressing laundered shirts and designing an effective work flow for a drycleaning plant.

The advanced class costs DLI members \$1,549 each and non-members \$2,049 each. There are additional discounts for two or more attendees from the same member company.

Both classes will be offered again later this year: the introductory course will run from Oct. 15 to 19 and the advanced class will run from Oct. 22 to Nov. 2.

Those who take both classes together can save additional money. Tuition is \$1,895 for DLI members and \$2,795 for everybody else.

For more information or to register, visit DLI online at www.dlionline.org or call (800) 638-2627.

PDCA heads to Baltimore for its Nov. Expo

Plans are underway for the Pennsylvania and Delaware Cleaners Association's 2018 Drycleaning and Laundry Expo Convention and Exhibit.

This year, the association will host the event in Baltimore, MD, from Nov. 9 to 11.

The Baltimore Convention Center is located in the city's Inner Harbor sightseeing hub, close in proximity to the National Aquarium, home of the USS Constellation and near Oriole Park at Camden Yards.

It is only about 15 minutes away from the Baltimore-Washington International Airport.

The exhibit hall hours will be open from 11 a.m. until 7 p.m. on Saturday and from 10 a.m. until 4 p.m. on Sunday.

PDCA has secured a discounted block of rooms at the host hotel, the Hyatt Regency Baltimore Inner Harbor. The cost for a room will be \$159 nightly for single or double occupancy.

To make reservations, contact them at (410) 528-1234 and mention your affiliation with the PDCA 2018 Drycleaning and Laundry Expo.

For more information on the show, contact PDCA at (215) 830-8490 or visit www.pdclean.org.

MAKING CENTS OF THE DOLLARS

COMPARING WET CLEANING & DRY CLEANING COSTS

New technologies allow wet cleaning to significantly improve throughput production over traditional dry cleaning. This makes a strong case for the eco-friendly wet cleaning process. But what about the costs associated with wet cleaning versus dry cleaning? When compared — dollar for dollar — wet cleaning is thousands less.

INITIAL INVESTMENT

First, let's evaluate the initial cost of each system. This is the amount required to purchase new alternative-solvent dry cleaning machines versus similarly sized Poseidon wet cleaning systems.

When the numbers are crunched, there's a \$67,000-\$72,000 cost differential in favor of Poseidon wet cleaning. But that's just the tip of the iceberg. Let's dig deeper.

1) Additional Capital Expenditures

Often, there are additional costs associated with operating a new dry cleaning machine, including upgrading boilers, chillers, air compressors and electrical. If you have to upgrade any of these because of your new dry cleaning machine, you'll fork out considerably more. Whereas, if you go with a wet cleaning system, you won't.

For example, a customer is installing an 80-pound capacity dry cleaning machine at a cost north of \$100,000 list price. It's going into an existing facility. To operate correctly, the dry cleaning machine will require the purchase of another chiller (\$16,000) and an 80 amp breaker. Additionally, the new chiller will require another 70 amp breaker. In the end, the new dry cleaning machine not only requires a new chiller; it demands a costly electrical upgrade. All this adds up.

By comparison, an 80-pound capacity Poseidon wet cleaning system, which operates on 15 amp breakers, doesn't require anything extra. So, if you add a wet cleaning system, you'll likely not have to purchase or upgrade anything else.

2) Operational Costs

We know now that the minimal initial investment of a 60-pound capacity dry cleaning machine is at least \$67,000 greater than that of a similarly sized wet cleaning system. We also know other capital expenditures and upgrades are also part of the installation and operational equation. Now, let's compare labor, chemistry/solvent, regulatory/licensing fees and utility costs.

Chemistry — Initial start-up costs for chemistry for a 60-pound wet cleaning machine is around \$2,000. It's \$6,000 for a 60-pound dry cleaning machine. From there on, there is not a huge difference.

Water — Water usage can vary. On the dry cleaning side, when a chiller is utilized to recycle water through a dry cleaning machine, very little water is used. But, a chiller costs between \$15,000 and \$30,000.

In general, a 60-pound wet cleaning machine uses 40 gallons of water per load, and over the course of a year, would go through as much water as a dry cleaning machine hooked to a water tower. A dry cleaning machine hooked to a chiller is the most water efficient. The only problem is that this scenario requires a costly initial investment.

Electricity — When it comes to electricity, wet cleaning comes out ahead. This is because a dry cleaning machine requires 60-90 amps to operate, whereas a wet cleaning system requires just 15.

Natural Gas — The boiler needed to operate a dry cleaning machine uses 670,000 BTUs, which dwarfs the wet cleaning requirement of 118,000 BTUs. Plus, a boiler will run until all plant production is completed for the day. A wet cleaning system dryer operates in 15-20 minute increments a dozen times a day. Again, wet cleaning wins.

Labor — When compared, labor costs are very similar in both dry cleaning and wet cleaning.

3) Regulatory & Waste Disposal Fees

Finally, regulatory fees and waste disposal costs are not uniform across the country because each state has its own set of laws. Typically, it costs hundreds per drum for removal of dry cleaning still-bottom-solvent wastes.

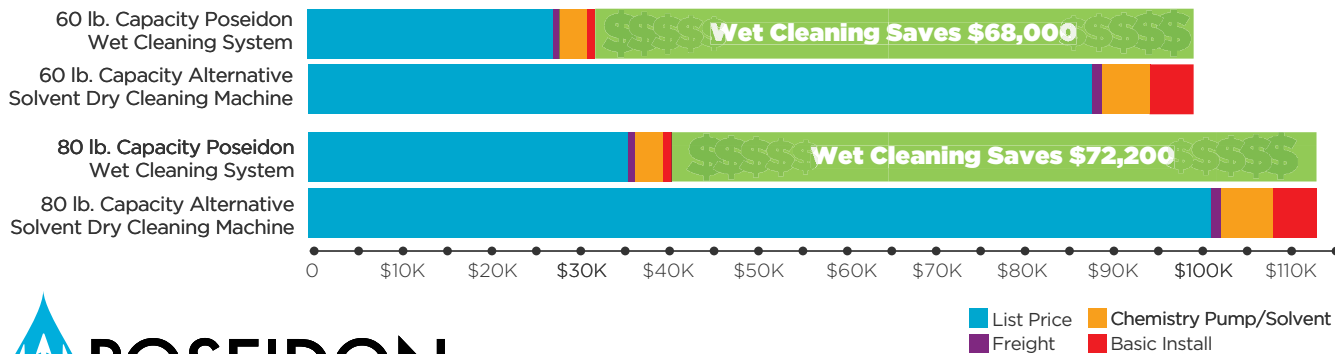
On the flip side, there are never disposal or regulatory costs for wet cleaning.

WET CLEANING — A THIRD OF THE COST OF DRY CLEANING

At the end of the day — when all factors are considered — wet cleaning costs are thousands less than those of dry cleaning. Plus, wet cleaning delivers 50 percent more throughput. That's a one-two punch that's hard to reckon with.

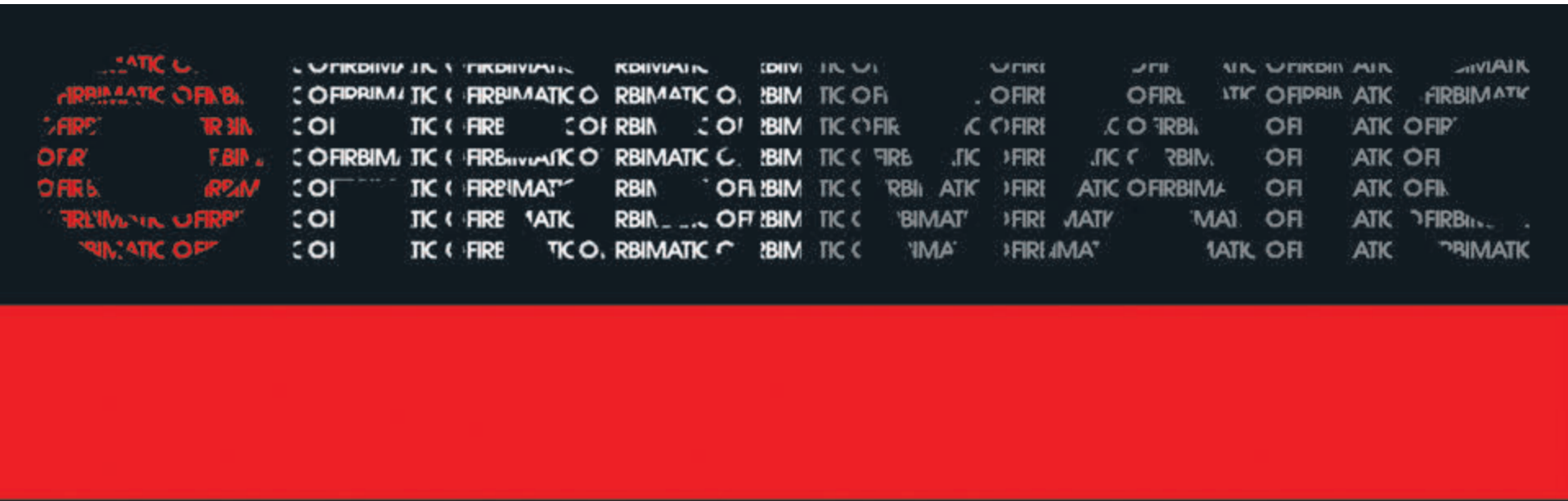
Please contact Jeff Quail at jquail@poseidonwetcleaning.com with any questions.

COST OF INSTALLING A POSEIDON WET CLEANING SYSTEM VS. AN ALTERNATIVE SOLVENT DRY CLEANING MACHINE



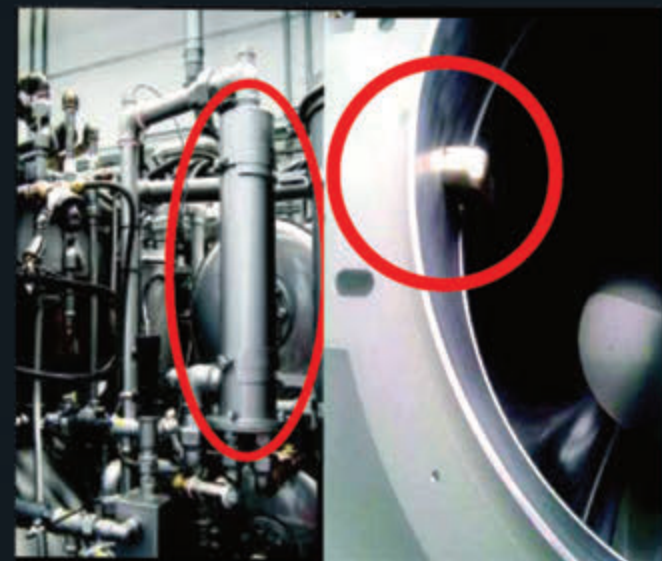
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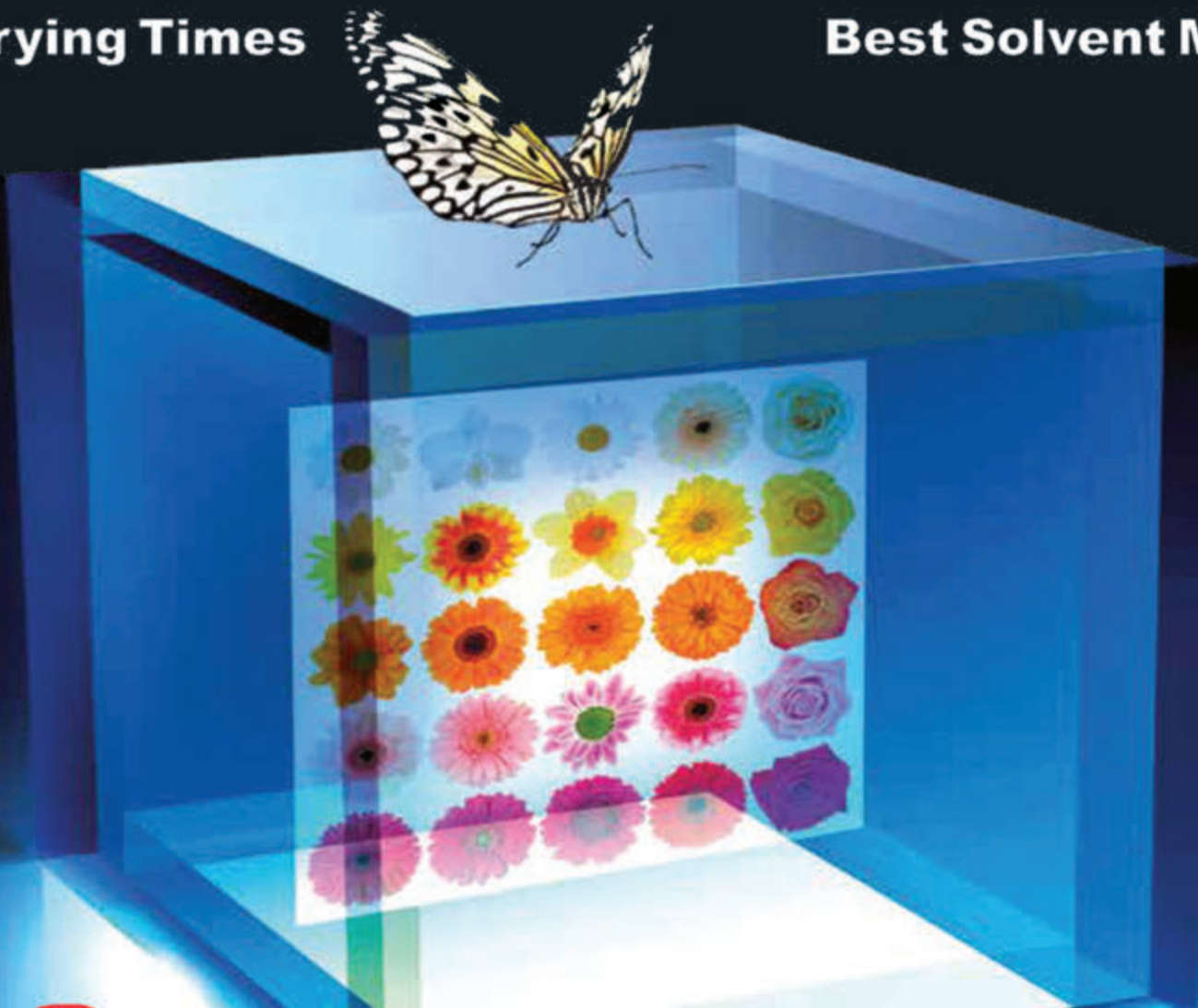


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SOUTH

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M&B employees enjoyed a celebratory barbecue in recognition of their contribution to the company being awarded for its outstanding safety record by the state of Alabama.

M&B Hangers has been recognized by the Alabama Department of Labor and Manufacture Alabama for its exemplary safety record in 2017.

The award was presented on April 12 at Manufacture Alabama's Safety, Human Resources, and Health Conference.

M&B Hangers was recognized for successfully operating with no lost-time accidents. M&B Hangers attributes this 12th consecutive year record to an ongoing commitment to maintaining the highest safety standard. Company president Milton Magnus in particular credits operations manager Dallas White and human resources director Darlene Yarbor-

ough in their commitment to upholding an outstanding safety record.

"This is a fantastic milestone that could not have been accomplished without their hard work," says Magnus.

Magnus continues, "This year we celebrate 75 years as a family-run business, and our motto at M&B is and has always been, 'Make It Happen.' All of our associates do just that. We make an intentional effort in all that we do, and Dallas' and Darlene's work is a perfect example of proactivity and leadership in keeping our team safe."

M&B Hangers' safety efforts run company-wide, and the employee-led safety committee meets monthly. Committee members change every six months, ensuring that every employee is personally invested in upholding the highest safety standard.

In celebration of their spotless safety record, M&B treated its associates to a celebratory barbecue on April 23.

M&B Hangers is also celebrating 75 years of producing wire garment hangers and paper products. Founded in 1943, the company is headquartered in Leeds, AL.

NCALC plans fall convention

The North Carolina Association of Launderers and Cleaners will hold its 2018 annual convention from Oct. 19-21 at the State View Hotel, Autograph Collection, located at 2451 Alumni Dr. (on the North Carolina State University campus) in Raleigh, NC.

Events on the schedule include a Friday evening Dinner Social, a Saturday morning Annual Membership and Board Meeting and a Saturday evening Recognition Banquet.

Look for more information on the convention in the coming months. Updates should be posted on NCALC's website at www.ncalc.org or call the office directly at (919) 313-4542.



NEW QUIK CLEANERS in Elizabethtown, TN, installed a Union HXL 8025C cleaning machine. John Armstrong (left) of WAG Equipment is pictured with Kirby Taylor of New Quik.



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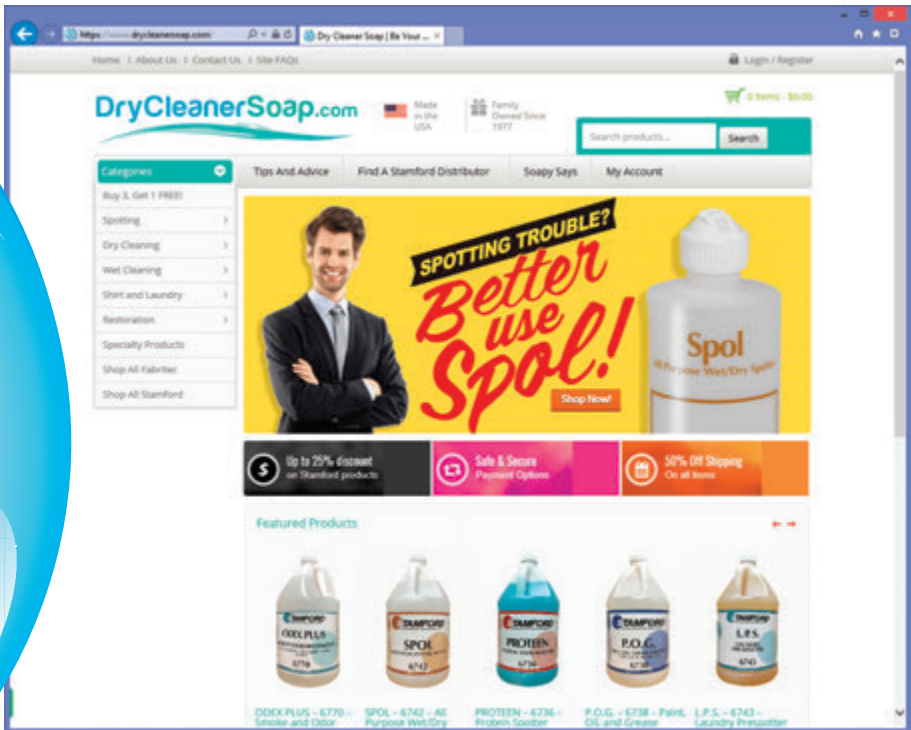
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SHIRT TALES

BY DON DESROSIERS

The cost of miscalculating PPLH

Some industry analysts will tell you that you should be aiming for 25 shirts processed for each and every shirt department labor hour that you buy.

This is commonly called pieces per operator hour and generally referred to by the acronym – PPOH.

I adopted this method years ago because this is the best way for me to get a snapshot of someone’s plant. A few decades ago, I renamed this and now call it PPLH. The “operator,” the “O,” sounds too much like a machine operator; a shirt presser.

I think that this led some down the wrong path. You would not call the shirt washer an “operator,” it doesn’t sound right. But you know that the shirt washer is an employee that you need to pay. They are working Labor hours, hence the “L.” PPLH levels the playing field.

I have no idea what that comes to in labor cost percentage. Labor cost percentage is useless to me because I have clients all over the United States and many foreign countries that charge between 70 cents and \$27 to launder and press a shirt. The gross income, of course, radically alters the percentage figure.

PPLH allows me to compare workflow patterns at laundries regardless of what they have to pay for a shirt presser and regardless of what

they can sell their service for. It is a good barometer for you, too, because it will keep you from getting a tainted view of your individual situation.

For instance, suppose you are relying upon a percentage figure and yours is higher than

you’d like or higher than that of your peers.

You may hide behind the fact that you must pay higher wages because of your community standards or that you can’t charge enough on average because of your wholesale accounts.

In reality if using PPLH to compare, you may find that you’ve developed a highly efficient plant or that your profit margin is being lost in inefficiency.

The biggest sin, I will prove to you, is calculating it incorrectly.

It happens to be a fact that 25 PPLH is very rarely achieved. About 95 out of every 100 cleaners that call me for advice have a PPLH of between 16 and 18. Some cleaners are below 12 PPLH.

Miscalculating PPLH makes my list of common goofs that cost you money with ease, and

is probably the biggest cause of declining profits in the industry, by far.

Let me explain, but first let’s make sure that we all understand that labor is your biggest expense. No surprise there, right?

Still, we love to beat up our supplier for a dollar on a case of hangers.

Why? Because labor does not appear to be out of line. Everybody is working, and when there is one person out sick, pandemonium rears its ugly head. We certainly conclude that our labor is at rock bottom. We essentially prove it when we have a skeleton crew.

When we hear about PPLH, even before we figure out what ours is, we conclude that we are surely within the envelope of respectability because of the very obvious fact that we have few employees and all of them work and, in fact, work very hard. Perhaps we think that we understand how to calculate it, but we just may second guess ourselves later.

Let me illustrate with an example. Let’s imagine a double-buck shirt unit operated by two employees. This unit feeds

two other “post-press” employees — an inspector/touch-up and an assembly person.

They, in turn, send off completed orders to be bagged. The person who bags drycleaning does the shirts as well. Our hypothetical plant

does 2,500 shirts per week. They average 80 to 85 shirts per hour and work about 37 hours per week.

To complete the fantasy, let’s say that you’ve just returned from your local DLI affiliate’s holiday social where they talked about PPLH and stressed 25 as a good goal in the shirt department.

Fiddling with numbers

When you figure out yours in the manner that was explained, you are flat out floored. It simply can’t be. Then you begin backing out certain labor hours until you have a palatable number — one that you won’t be embarrassed to admit to your peers. The truth is that you are lying to yourself.

Here are a few ways to improperly calculate PPLH, and then I’ll show you how to do it correctly.

An honest PPLH number is never a spike, it is a global average. A common mistake then, is to actually include all of the labor hours that you should but select a small window of time to calculate it.

Let’s say that the plant that we described a minute ago has an equipment failure during the week.

Consequently, there are still 220 shirts to do at two o’clock on Friday afternoon. Your employees are used to going home at that time, but they hang in there and press like they have had way too much coffee.

They finish at 4, they’ve done a good job on the shirts, and they have finished much earlier than mathematics led you to believe at 2 p.m.

You are pumped up from a combination of too much coffee yourself, last night’s pep talk about PPLH and the fact that your pressers finished an hour earlier than you thought that they would. They have pressed at the rate of 110 shirts per hour. Two pressers plus two support people, each working two hours (between 2 and 4 p.m.) for a total labor hour usage of 8.

Two hundred twenty shirts, using eight hours of labor is 27.5 PPLH (220/8 = 27.5 PPLH).

You may reason: “Hmm, 27.5 PPLH! Excellent! Nobody that I’ve talked to is doing that well. Well, actually, I’m not doing 27.5. My pressers really kicked butt this afternoon. If they pressed at their normal rate, I’d probably be at 25 PPLH.”

The next time that someone asks you about PPLH, you will probably tell them that you are right at 25, maybe a hair under, “...but we do a quality shirt.” Everybody says that.

There are so many things wrong with this all too common scenario.

- PPLH is a global average. Sighting the performance during a small window of time is inaccurate, perhaps even meaningless. It only serves to allow you to justify clutching onto a money-wasting system and never allows you to see

Miscalculating PPLH makes my list of common goofs that cost you money with ease, and is probably the biggest cause of declining profits in the industry, by far.

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Don Desrosiers

The cost of miscalculating PPLH

Continued from page 20

the desperate need to make a serious change.

It is remarkably easy to calculate PPLH, but so often the accepted formula yields a truly offensive number. The conclusion is that “you did it wrong.”

The result of that, remarkably, is to tweak the formula until its product is more like what the guys at the meetings tell you it should be. Nothing could be more wrong. Nothing could be more costly.

Let’s go back to our hypothetical plant with two pressers and two other employees for a minute.

Who washes the shirts? Who marks them in? Who packages the completed orders?

If these tasks are being done for “free,” then you and I need to have a heart to heart meeting.

“Free” labor?

Commonly, one reason is that these chores are done by someone else and therefore their labor cost is not relevant or the task itself is done for “free.” This is wrong.

First, let’s consider the packaging duties. They are being done by the person who bags the drycleaning. Half of those labor hours MUST be charged

to the shirt department.

Disagree? How can it possibly make sense to charge that labor to the drycleaning department? It doesn’t matter that “that department can afford it.” You are only kidding yourself.

If the labor cost belongs to shirts, it belongs to shirts. Period. You could argue that if that person didn’t bag shirts, she’d still have to be there all day, so therefore it’s being done for free. That’s not such a foreign thought.

But that is when you would have to play manager and combine the drycleaning bagging duties with another “part-time” job that takes all day, like perhaps inspection. Only you can answer that because it will differ in virtually every plant.

In any case, packaging labor can not be ignored, even if for no other reason than to compare yourself with your peers. If your total number of shirts is approximately equal to your number of drycleaning pieces in any given time frame, then half of the bagger’s hours must be charged to shirts.

All of these words are also true for washing labor (which may be done by your drycleaner/spotter) although it may be only five to ten hours per week.

I look at mark-in labor from the other side of the fence,

however. It is generally considered acceptable to charge the cost to tag or mark-in to the customer service department. The best justification for doing so is that, for the purpose of comparison with your peers, everybody does it that way.

Arguably, shirt productivity is being measured and shirts have not begun their time in “production” until they have arrived at the washing arena. If you wish to compare yourself to a peer that has a central mark-in area, like perhaps a wholesaler, you should attempt to figure the amount of time that your customer service staff actually uses to mark-in shirts. An accurate figure will be tough to tabulate. But never consider mark-in to be free.

If you need to prove this to yourself, you will do so if you invest in one of those fancy tagging machines that will require you to perform central mark-in. With that, you will not save labor. You will create a new job instead.

When I had my last wholesale shirt laundry, I was at 28 pieces per operator hour, but that had to include mark-in, as all of the business was wholesale.

I now have clients that have a PPLH of over 30 (my own personal drycleaner, for instance, is at 31). In order for

me to compare his performance to my own, I would need to recalculate my historical figures and exclude the mark-in hours. He has a couple of stores where the counter personnel do the mark-in chores.

Incidentally, suppose you have a full-timer plus a part-timer at a store (say, eight hours plus four hours), and you are able to calculate that one-third of their time is used to mark-in shirts. That is probably far too many hours, but it serves to illustrate this point.

Would that then mean that if they did not mark-in shirts, you could then eliminate the part-time position? Very unlikely. Much more likely is that the part-timer is there to keep customers from waiting during the busy time between 7 and 11 a.m.

In the final analysis, it is perfectly acceptable, in fact recommended, that mark-in hours not be counted unless central mark-in is the rule. In that case, the mark-in hours would be backed only for the purpose of comparison with others.

Don’t kid yourself

At our hypothetical plant, how can they be averaging 80 to 85 shirts per hour if they work for 37 hours? You argue that you pay them for breaks and restroom visits and maybe even lunches.

Nice try. That dog don’t hunt.

The fact is you are paying for 37 hours per employee. Like it or not, you are doing 67.5 shirts per hour. Mortified? You should be. Defensive, perhaps? No surprise.

You explain that they actually do process 80 shirts per hour, it’s just that they have to help the assembly people or do some folds after they’re done pressing.

That doesn’t fly. The fact is, we are not calculating how many shirts we can press per hour, we are calculating a productivity figure.

Press a thousand shirts per hour if you wish, but they aren’t ready to return to the customer until all of the necessary processes are complete. Or, press a thousand shirts per hour if you wish, but if you need a hundred people to do it, you will be broke before you finish reading this publication.

So whether you like it or not, our hypothetical plant isn’t even close to the 25 PPLH that he may brag about. In actuality, he has two pressers that each work 37 hours (74), two post-press people that likely work a little more than that (but we will be conservative and count them as 74 hours, too, for a sub-total of 148). Seven hours for washing labor (155) and let’s say 16 hours for

bagging. That is a total of 171 hours for 2,500 shirts.

The PPLH is simple to calculate: 2,500 divided by 171 labor hours = 14.6 PPLH. Ouch!

This hypothetical plant may or may not resemble your plant, but I think that you get the picture.

What to do?

Can it be saved? Of course it can! But it requires that scary thing that we call management. The pressers are probably not lazy; likely they simply have not been trained to effectively produce 90 to 100 shirts per hour while maintaining top quality.

There is a good chance that the workflow rhythm in the plant is such that it generates relative confusion in the inspection and assembly theater and the need for two people rather than one. Even without added production from the shirt unit, shirts per hour remaining at a lowly 67.5, PPLH would be increased to 18.6 with the reduction of one employee. As much as that is — a savings of over 25 percent in labor dollars or roughly \$13,500 per year — it is still a far cry from what is possible.

In fact, it is easy to actually double those savings without increasing shirts per hour from the shirt unit even one bit!

A reasonable goal, by the way, would be 29 PPLH for this scenario. And this is done everyday, at efficient plants.

The hazard, and the point of this column, is that if you miscalculate your PPLH and think that you are already at 27.5, you will do nothing about it because you will mathematically deduce that you are as efficient as you can be, when in fact you are merely at 14.6 PPLH. You are leaving a whopping \$29,120 on the lunch table for your employees to take.

That is the cost of miscalculating pieces per operator hour.

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Don Desrosiers has been in the drycleaning and shirt laundering business since 1978. He is a work-flow engineer and a management consultant who provides services to shirt launderers and drycleaners through Tailwind Systems. He is a member of the Society of Professional Consultants and winner of DLI’s Commitment to Professionalism award. He can be reached at 186 Narrow Ave., Westport, MA 02790 or at his office by fax (508) 636-8839; by cell (508) 965-3163; or e-mail at tailwindsystems@charter.net. The Tailwind web site is www.tailwindsystems.com.

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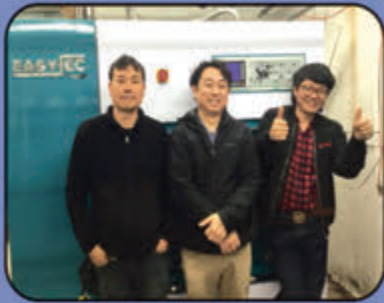
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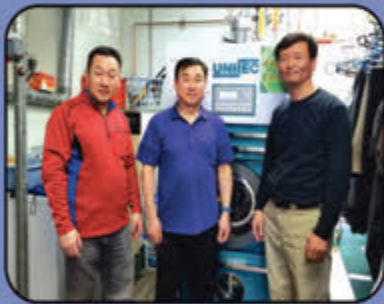
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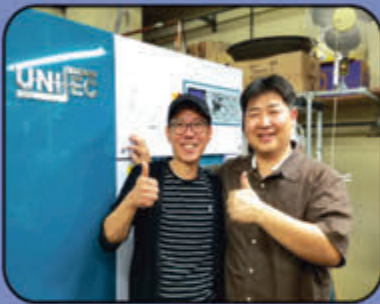
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THE SPOTTING BOARD



BY DAN EISEN

Dealing with dye bleeding issues

The laboratory analysis department of a drycleaning association has reported problems with spandex blended fabrics consisting of rayon and polyester. Spandex is an elastic yarn similar to rubber but consists of polyurethane. It is used to give fabrics better fit and wearability.

Spandex blended fabrics may consist of rayon or polyester or both. The dyes on polyester and rayon are usually stable to both drycleaning and wetcleaning when not blended with Spandex.

When polyester and rayon yarns are blended with Spandex, the fabric can be fugitive to drycleaning solvent or water or both. I do not know the reason why the Spandex blend produced a less serviceable fabric. The Spandex blended fabrics are often used in expensive women's designer garments. The garments may consist of mostly black dresses or womans suits with white trim or mostly white garments with black trim.

Testing to drycleaning

The serviceability of the dyes on

these fabrics can easily be tested. Wipe an unexposed area with a Q-tip damp with solvent or oily type paint remover. Note if the dye transferred to the Q-tip. It is important to note that if the drycleaner uses hot solvent in their cleaning machine the test is not accurate and bleeding can occur.

Drycleaning and hot solvent

The biggest source of bleeding problems occur with those drycleaners using hot solvent. This was documented by the problem garments sent to my garment analysis laboratory. Many manufacturers advocate heating up solvent to increase the KB value of less aggressive solvent such as GreenEarth and hydrocarbon. Although drycleaners may obtain a more aggressive solvent, they run a greater risk of dye bleeding and possibly a damaged garment. It should be noted that drycleaners using cooler solvents have not encountered as many problems.

Correction

I had a problem with these garments in a recent consultation. Five spandex blended dresses with white trim bled

in the drycleaning process. The spotter tried batching the garment and wetcleaning with no results. We then tried running each one in the drycleaning machine separately. The result was that they were corrected. The high solvent level in agitation prevented dye transfer. The rule is if something bleeds in drycleaning it should be drycleaned again.

Wetcleaning

The fabrics can also bleed in wetcleaning even if labeled washable. Many drycleaners may run these garments on a gentle cycle for fabric safety. A gentle cycle or soaking creates more bleeding. The more time a fabric soaks and is not flushed the more chance it has of transferring dye. Dye setting agents usually do not stabilize poor dye.

Testing

The easiest way to test is to place a clean cloth under the garment and flush with the steam gun noting dye transfer.

Correction

The easiest way to attempt correc-

tion is to run the fabric over again in a regular run. The constant agitation and flushing with warm water prevents dye transfer from occurring.

Bleaching

On dye transfer, a titanium sulphate bath may work well. Testing is necessary to ascertain how readily the rayon is affected by the bleach. Sometimes if the testing shows the dyes are affected by stripping agents it can often still be stripped by immersing the garment in the bleach bath for a few seconds. This immersion process can be repeated several times until correction is obtained.

When making up the bleach bath make sure you follow the manufacturer's instructions.

Dan Eisen, former chief garment analyst for the National Cleaners Association, can be reached at (772) 340-0909 or (772) 579-5044 or by e-mail at clean-dan@comcast.net. He offers independent garment analysis and provides consulting services. His website is www.garment-analysis.com.

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Long Beach will host three days of all things drycleaning

Whether you need to network, examine equipment or soak up some seminar strategies, the California Cleaners Association’s Fabricare Show 2018 should be on your radar.

The event will take place from Aug. 17 to 19 at the Long Beach Convention Center and it will definitely be a busy few days for attendees.

Things will kick off on Friday with a special full day of in-depth seminars that require a separate registration from the show.

The Leadership Day itinerary

will begin at 10 a.m. with a program by Krista Clive-Smith, a professional speaker on branding and business innovation.

She will present “Get Noticed. Be Remembered.” The two-hour session will explore the topics of brand recognition, how to create a personal brand for success and how to achieve success.

At noon, attendees can enjoy lunch and a discussion by speaker Riaz Chauthani who will explore “Business Valuation and Preparing for Business Succession” for one hour.

Rounding out the day will be one more program, this time headed by Brian Rashid, an international speaker and branding expert.

He will present “Smart Social Media Marketing” with an emphasis on digital marketing on a shoestring budget easily and effectively.

All three programs will cost CCA members \$160 each to attend. Non-members must pay \$250 each.

The official Fabricare 2018 programming begins the following morning with a 9:30 a.m. seminar on “Maximizing Revenue Streams” by Chris Moreno of Laundry Locker.

He will examine how drycleaners can get more profit streams, such as wash-n-fold service or the use of newer technology including laundry lockers and apps.

One hour later, Jibit Cinar will take to the podium to offer a critical update on California human resources and employment issues including the latest news on sexual harassment in the workplace, minimum wage issues, and hiring and firing problems.

On Sunday, the focus will shift back to marketing when Kyle Nesbit, Vice President of Business Development for MW Cleaners, will discuss “Marketing for Profit” from 10 to 11 a.m.

Afterwards, Fabricoach Jim Groshans will outline “The Team Approach to Building Customer Service Excellence” at 11 a.m.

The Saturday and Sunday seminar sessions are free to all CCA members, as is registration to the show.

Non-members can take advantage of early bird pricing at \$55 each before Aug. 1. After that date, the cost climbs to \$75 each.

All registrants will have full access to the exhibit hall during its hours of operation: from 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. on Saturday and from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Sunday.

There will also be live clinics all day during show hours.

For hotel accommodations, there are two nearby options. The headquarters hotel for the event is the Renaissance Long Beach located at 111 E. Ocean Blvd across the street from the convention center. CCA has a block of rooms for \$189 per night for those who call (562) 437-5900 and mention the Fabricare Show while making reservations.

A small block of rooms is also available at the Hyatt Regency Long Beach, located adjacent to the convention center.

The special show discount rate is \$219 per night. To make reservations, contact the hotel at (562) 491-1234. When making reservations, mention the Fabricare Show.

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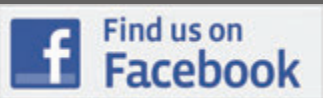
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KEEP IT LEGAL



BY FRANK KOLLMAN

The problem with arbitration

In May, the United States Supreme Court ruled that mandatory arbitration provisions in employment agreements are enforceable.

In most employment disputes, employees can file lawsuits in state or federal court to decide their claims of discrimination, unpaid wages, or wrongful termination, to name but a few. The purpose of these mandatory arbitration agreements is to prevent lawsuits in favor of cheaper, more efficient arbitration.

The court also approved similar agreements that waive an employee's right to participate in a class action.

Typically, employees are required at the time of their hire to sign these agreements, which may also include confidentiality requirements and non-compete terms.

Taking a look at these mandatory arbitration provisions politically, liberal folk tend to disfavor them and conservative folk tend to like them. While I am generally very conservative when it comes to employment matters, I do not favor arbitration,

which is the reason for this article.

Many of the things about arbitration that make it popular with business people also

Judges are government officials with ethical obligations; arbitrators are ordinary folk chosen by the parties to resolve a dispute.

labor. As a result, unfair decisions outnumber the fair ones.

Arbitrations can be cheaper, quicker, and more efficient. If you lose because you have se-

cases after a charge has been filed with an agency that first looks at the problem.

If all an employee has to do is demand arbitration, employ-

A judge has to make findings of fact and law. An arbitrator only has to justify his or her decision in the broadest terms and is not truly answerable to anyone.

make it unattractive to me. An arbitration decision, as long as it is consistent with the matters under dispute, is virtually impossible to have overturned. If a judge makes a mistake, there are appeals' courts; if an arbitrator makes a mistake, that is the end of it.

Further, while an arbitrator can be required by the parties to state the reason for his or her decision, such a requirement is easy to skirt.

A judge has to make findings of fact and law; an arbitrator, because the decision is virtually impossible to overturn, only has to justify his or her decision in the broadest terms.

Because arbitrators are not truly answerable to anyone, their decisions vary widely. Further, because arbitrators are selected by the parties — either by agreement or from a panel of arbitrators provided by an arbitration group like the American Arbitration Association or the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service — they have an incentive to reach decisions that encourage other litigants to select them in the future.

Those decisions frequently are designed to make no one happy or avoid the appearance that an arbitrator selected in an employment case, for example, favors either management or

lected or been given a bad arbitrator, those considerations go out the window.

All the efficiency in the world is no substitute for a correct decision, or at least a decision that will be reviewed by a panel of judges to make sure it was correct. Renegade arbitrators are harder to stop than renegade judges.

The class action waiver, which can be part of the agreement, has more to say for it. An employee who has not waived this right can very easily be added to a class of employees claiming they were paid improperly, were victims of discrimination, or were otherwise subjected to mistreatment by the employer.

Many employees prefer not to sue their employers, even when there is a basis, so such a waiver can be used by the employee to avoid being dragged into a dispute with a company that, for the most part, he or she likes. This is frequently the case in wage and hour litigation.

One other pitfall of mandatory arbitration provisions is that arbitration can be triggered by a mere demand. A lawsuit usually requires a complaint filed in court, in many

ers could find themselves in more litigation — cheaper and more efficient — than they were before. While it would be good for my practice, I would not like to see a company that gets sued once every five to ten years find itself conducting two arbitrations (or more) a year.

If you are interested in mandatory arbitration, despite my arguments against it, I suggest you contact your lawyer for some model language.

Requiring current employees to agree to it could present some problems, such as what do you do to the employee who refuses.

Requiring new hires to sign is less confrontational. Again, your lawyer should have suggestions on how to implement your new mandatory arbitration policy. Beware, however, the bad arbitrator.

Frank Kollman is a partner in the law firm of Kollman & Saucier, PA, in Baltimore, MD. He can be reached by phone at (410) 727-4300 or fax (410) 727-4391. His firm's web site can be found at www.kollmanlaw.com has articles, sample policies, news and other information on employee/employer relations.

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-Mike Astorino, Fabricare Cleaners

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ON TIME CLEANERS in New York, NY, installed a Pony tensioning shirt system. Pictured from left are Mr. Kim, an employee of On Time, and Bryan Kim, the plant manager. New York Machinery handled the sale and installation.



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Bob Hamila (*Lighthouse Cleaners / Palm Beach Gardens, FL*)

Finally, a solvent that is comparable to perc in cleaning strength, but gentle enough to handle all of the beads, sequins and faux finishes that adorn today's clothing. **intense**® is clean smelling, incredibly reclaimable and easy to use. We are 10 weeks+ in a new Union hydrocarbon machine with **intense**® solvent and extremely satisfied with the results. We still haven't had to change the filters or have the waste picked up because there is so little of it, but we look forward to the savings there as well. Probably the wisest decision we've made yet. Thanks Ken for all your help.

Stephanie Barrero (*Door2Door Drycleaners / Bluffton, SC*)

I've been waiting for a solvent alternative to PERC. I look for companies that have a proven track record of longevity. What's important to me is to partner with a company that believes in constant innovation, technology advances and unparalleled support. I have always found this with SEITZ, which gave me the confidence to embrace and convert to their new solvent. It is performing fabulously and will allow me to make the necessary changes to continue to improve my service and my business.

Bill Wright (*Royal Fine Cleaners / Northport, AL*)

For as long as I've been in dry cleaning, I've been using Seitz products. From their spotting chemicals to dry cleaning detergents, all performed beyond my expectations. So when it came time to make the switch from Perc to an environmentally friendly solvent, I turned to SEITZ. Their answer was **intense**®. It's cleaning and grease cutting ability made my transition from Perc very easy. I'm glad I chose SEITZ. Thank you for another quality product!

Julian Bulsara (*Prestige Cleaners / Lauderhill, FL*)

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MIDWEST



FIFTH AVENUE CLEANERS in Kansas City, MO, installed two new Columbia C550 VGH drycleaning machines. Pictured from left are Jim Mayfield, the owner, Chris Hogard, Columbia representative, and Steve Moler, the installer.

MILD to hear from Nealis, solvent users at convention

The Boyne Highland Resort in Harbor Springs will host the Michigan Institute of Laundering and Drycleaning which will be heading to Harbor Springs for its summer convention scheduled to be held July 20 to 22.

A MILD board meeting and a welcome reception on Friday will kick off the weekend's events.

On Saturday, Nora Nealis, executive director of the National Cleaners Association, will deliver a keynote address.

She will advise cleaners on how to succeed, from a look at in-

dustry disruptors, to fashion trends that demand more than traditional drycleaning, to opportunities for growth. She will also discuss millennial behavior and explore drycleaning service enhancements, apps and other "hooks" that appeal to them.

On Sunday, the audience will hear from a panel of solvent users. Experienced drycleaners who use GreenEarth, K4, Sensene, Intense, and perc will discuss the pros and cons and answer the production questions like stain removal, softness and odor quality.

Other events for the weekend include a nine-hole golf outing on Saturday afternoon and a president's reception and dinner Saturday evening.

Registration for the conference is \$250 for members, \$75 for an adult guest, \$25 for children between eight and 17, and children under eight can attend for free.

Non-members pay \$300 each with \$100 for an adult guest, \$25 for children between eight and 17, and free for children under eight.

Registration fees cover the full conference attendance, the welcome reception, the president's reception and dinner.

For room accommodations at the Boyne Highlands Resort, call (800) 462-6963.

For more information, call MILD, (877) 390-6453 or visit www.mildmi.org.

Zips eyes 10 store openings in Cincinnati

Zips Dry Cleaners has signed a franchise agreement to open 10 stores in the Cincinnati region over the next eight years.

Josh Pinkey of DeVoe & Pinkey Enterprises LLC, will own and operate the stores.

"Zips is the future of drycleaning, and we know that Cincinnati residents will appreciate our commitment to making and keeping quality drycleaning services affordable at one low price," Pinkey said.

Based in Maryland, Zips is known for its same-day, one-price business model in which customers can have clothing items cleaned for a flat rate of \$2.29. The flat-rate pricing applies to any clothing item, Pinkey said, whether it's a necktie, coat or pair of pants.

"It's easy to understand why an entrée at a restaurant costs more than an appetizer or why getting a new transmission costs more than an oil change," Pinkey said. "But why should you pay more to dryclean a coat than a pair of pants when they're both cleaned using the exact same process?"

No Cincinnati area locations have been formally announced, but Zips is looking at locations in Downtown, Oakley, Hyde Park, Blue Ash and Florence among others.

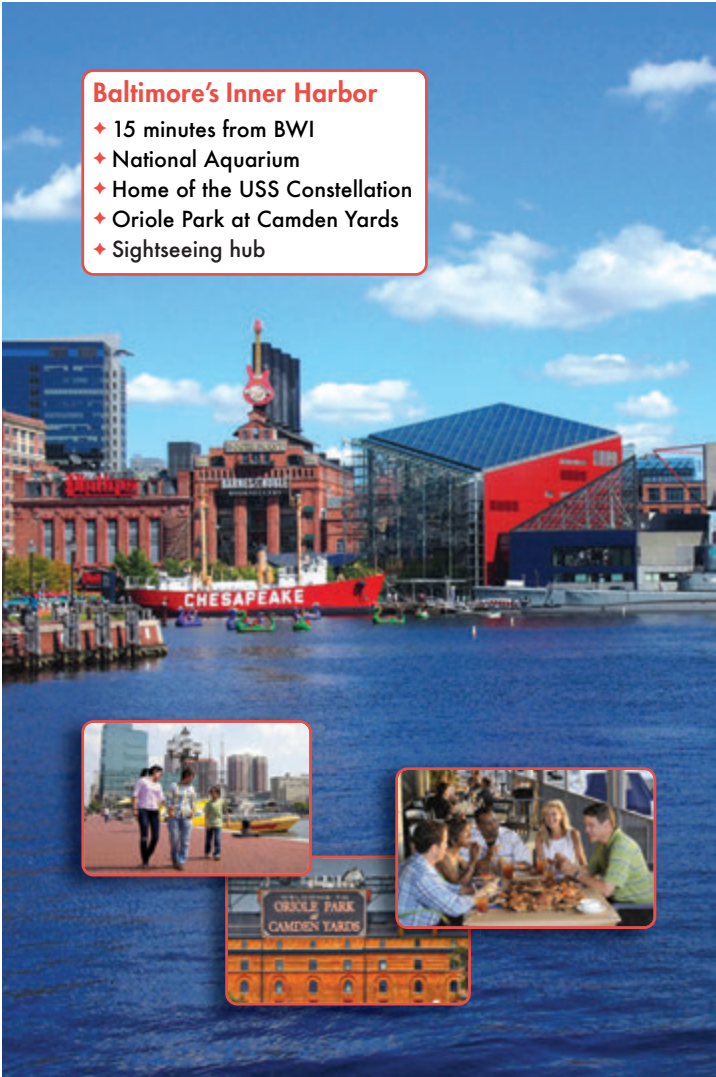
The company has also announced agreements to open five franchise stores in the Indianapolis, IN, metro area over the next five years as it pursues expansion plans.

Zips said it has more than 50 locations open and operating throughout the Midatlantic region and in the states of Texas and California.

Exhibit at the 2018 DRYCLEANING & LAUNDRY EXPO

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WRENCH WORKS



By BRUCE GROSSMAN

The dreaded water pump failure

The article for this month will be about how to handle the failure of the water pump. This pump supplies coolant to the still and refrigeration condensers and in many cases the solvent cooler of the drycleaning machine.

In order to cool these components, a liquid called “coolant” is forced through the coils of the condensers by a pump.

In systems using a water tower, the coolant is water; in systems using a chiller it is either water or a mixture of water and anti-freeze called “brine.”

In water tower installations, the pump is sometimes located on the roof near the tower or on the floor near the drycleaning machine; in chillers the pump is generally inside the enclosure housing the refrigeration components.

Before we get into managing this species of disaster, a few words about prevention. These pumps seldom fail without giving ample warning of an evolving problem.

If the circuit breaker in the electrical panel that controls the pump trips frequently it is a sure sign of looming disaster.

If you are not afraid of electricity this would be the time to set the breaker for the pump in the off position, remove the protective electrical plate at the rear of the pump then take a good look at the wire connections at both the pump.

There is precious little room for the wire connections in the end of the pump and pumps vibrate, causing the screw connections or push on connectors to loosen and eventually fail; in many cases this is the problem area.

Using a flashlight observe if there is any melted insulation, bluing or discoloration of the wires or connectors. If so replace them.

If you are not experienced in working with electricity hire an electrician for the following procedures.

Remove the cover to the appropriate breaker panel and switch off the breaker controlling the pump. Make sure screws holding the wires in place are securely tightened down. Using a flashlight observe if there is any melted insulation, bluing or discoloration of the wires or circuit breaker connections or the area where the circuit breaker attaches to the power busses in the breaker box.

Frequent shutdowns

Another harbinger of doom is frequent pump motor shut down due to the motor overheating, which trips the motors internal protective thermostat.

If this is the case, follow the same steps outlined in the previous paragraph and in addition make sure the louvers that allow air to flow through the motor are free of lint, dust or obstructions.

You can drastically shorten the time this internal thermostat requires to reset by obtaining a bag of ice, placing it inside another strong plastic bag and laying it on the far end of the pump motor. Remember, this is only a temporary solution.

The following goes for all electrical equipment. Do not use the circuit breakers as switches to turn equipment on and off! This practice results in the degrading of the breakers performance and sometimes will keep the breaker from tripping at the right current levels. Each machine should have a disconnect close by; use this for switching instead of the breaker.

Excessive head pressure

The next pump killer is excessive head pressure. Excessive head pressure could be caused by a number of factors (see last month’s article) and will be indicated by a high reading (45 PSI and above) on the pump outlet pressure gage, if you have one installed.

Also, the sound of the pump starting up will be different under high head pressure.

Trying to describe sounds is near impossible but the best way I can is to say that when starting, the pump the sound will take longer to even out (sorry, best I could do).

Causes of this problem often lie in the bypass valve being shut or not sufficiently opened or the clogging of strainers going into the drycleaning machinery.

Make a coolant bypass

OK, we’ve done our best to avoid the problem, but what to do when the pump fails so you can continue running the drycleaning machine?

We give the drycleaning machine a “coolant bypass.” You’re going to need two lengths of garden hose, preferably with an ID of 5/8 - 7/8".

One length needs to reach from a water source like a hose bib outside the plant or a faucet or valve inside the plant in order to supply cold water; the other length needs to reach outside through a door or to a toilet, sink or drain in order to remove the water which has flowed through the machine.

In addition, two adapters from the garden hose type fitting to pipe type fittings will also be required.

Now let’s take a look at what’s available at the drycleaning machine end.

First, you’ll need to shut the valves going to the water pump on both the supply (high pressure) and return (low pressure) side to prevent the city water that will be flowing from bypassing the drycleaning machine.

On properly designed and installed cooling water systems, there should be connections for pressure gages and thermometers as well as other locations where you can break into the cooling water supply on the water inlet and outlet sides in order to attach these hose connections.

If not, you will need to open unions, break into the piping, and install tees to allow the hoses to be hooked up. If you are in the unenviable situation of having to install tees, also install hose bibs (these are the angled valves that you use for connecting garden hoses) and you will have a permanent emergency connection for future use.

OK, now we’re all “hooked up” (different meaning today from when I grew up) and ready to go.

Turn on the water and make sure you’ve got flow through the drycleaning machine when it’s in the dry cycle (some machines will prevent water flow when not required).

You may not be able to distill and dry at the same time, but at least you can operate while awaiting a new pump.

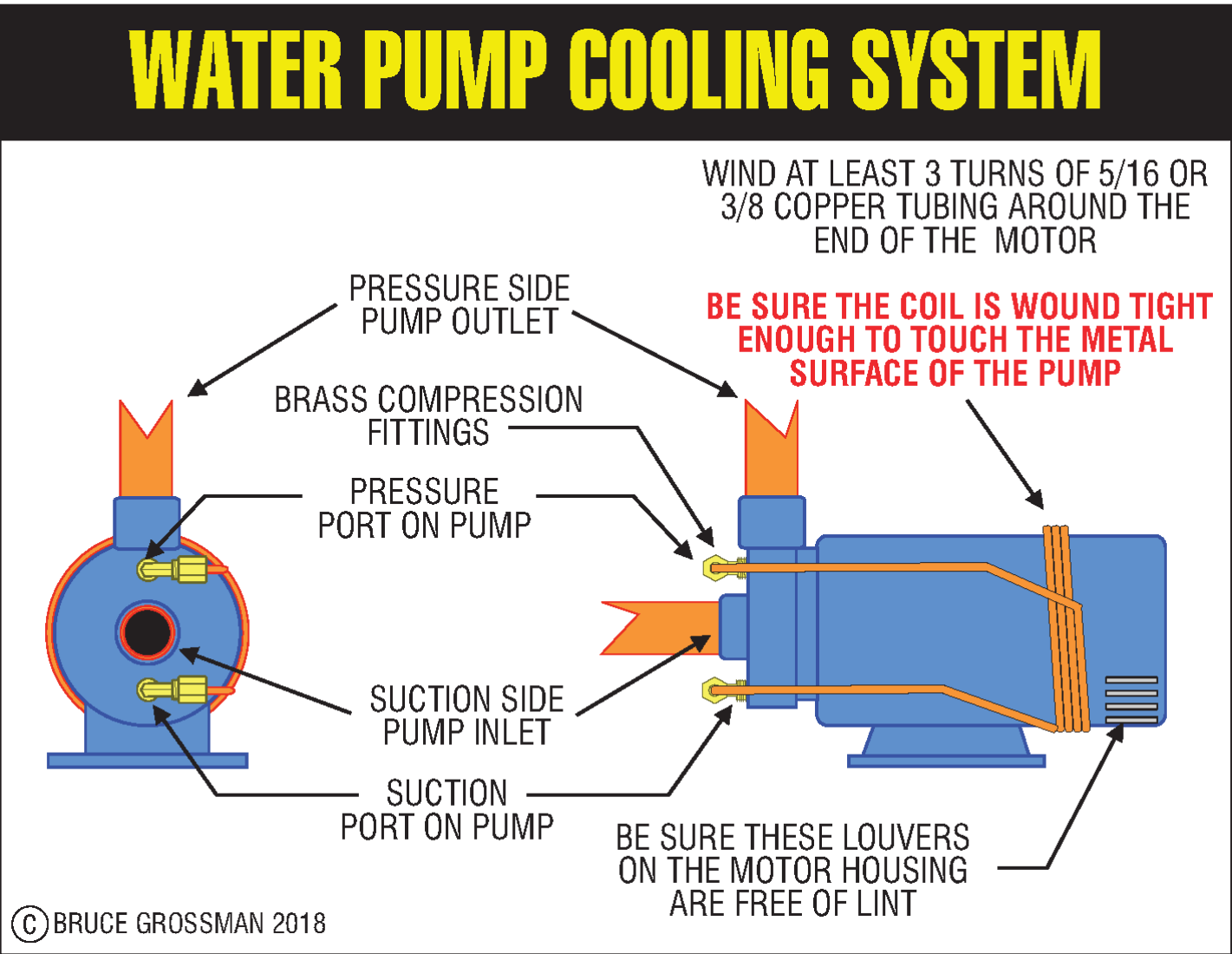
All new pump or just parts?

On the subject of new pumps — in many cases there is no need to replace the entire pump requiring lots of pipe disassembly and reassembly. If you order exactly the same model pump it is usually possible to unbolt the motor/impellor side from the raceway/piping side and just bolt on the new motor/impellor side onto the old existing raceway/piping side.

The next logical question is, in that case why purchase the entire pump? The answer is I have never been able to obtain a completely assembled motor/impellor assembly, without the raceway, that’s why!

The illustration for this month shows a really simple and inexpensive method to prevent the pump motor from overheating. Whether you’re currently experiencing overheating problems or not, it’s well worth it to install this cooling device.

Bruce Grossman is the chief of R&D for EZtimers Manufacturing, maker of the new EZ Level return tank water level control. To prevent boiler scaling and other damage, the EZ Level return tank water level control replaces that troublesome ball float valve in the condensate return tank. For saving money on handling waste, the SAHARA and DROP IN THE BUCKET line of high purity separator water mister/evaporators provide a thrifty, legal method to get rid of the separator water generated by your drycleaning machine. For further information, visit www.eztimers.com. Address any questions or comments for Bruce to bruce@eztimers.com or call (702) 376-6693.





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INFORMATION CENTRAL

Products and Services for Drycleaners

USDA certification for biobased cleaning solvent

TAMPA, FL — Kreussler Inc. that it has earned the U.S. Department of Agriculture Certified Biobased Product label, making its SolvonK4 now able to display a USDA label that highlights its percentage of biobased content.

Third-party verification for a product's biobased content is administered through the USDA BioPreferred Program, an initiative created by the 2002 Farm Bill and recently expanded by the 2014 Farm Bill. One of the goals of the BioPreferred Program is to increase the development, purchase and use of biobased products.

The USDA Certified Biobased Product label displays a product's biobased content, which is the portion of a product that comes from a renewable source, such as plant, animal, marine, or forestry feedstocks.

Richard Fitzpatrick, vice president of Kreussler Inc., said, "Being the first and only drycleaning solvent on the market with the USDA BioPreferred label provides credibility and visibility to Kreussler's commitment to our client's needs and the environment. This new BioPreferred label indicates that SolvonK4 has been independently certified to meet the USDA BioPreferred program standards for

biobased content. Having the BioPreferred label from the USDA is an important distinction for SolvonK4 and the SystemK4 drycleaning process and Kreussler is proud of this achievement."

Kreussler has partnered with Green Biologics, Inc. to produce bio-based SystemK4. Green Biologics will use its patented fermentation process to take locally-grown feedstocks from family-owned American farms and convert it through a low-energy, minimal waste process into the bio-based n-butanol used to produce SolvonK4, the main solvent in the SystemK4 drycleaning process. SolvonK4 will now be sustainable and bio-based while retaining the cleaning attributes of the original formula.

"This next step for SystemK4 adds a critical and significant advantage for our clients, the ability to market a bio-derived and sustainable cleaning fluid," said Fitzpatrick. "Green Biologics advanced developments in fermentation has given us the ability to push solvent-based textile cleaning into a new level and completes the picture of unparalleled cleaning, cost-effective operations, extremely low risk, and true ecological benefits."

To learn more, visit www.kreussler.com.

Steam cabinet



TAMPA, FL — Unipress has a steam cabinet that it says is easy to operate and can increase production with a minimum of training.

The SC 1 cabinet offers quick steam injection with a powerful blower.

The dimensions of the unit are 75.5 inches tall, 40.5 inches wide and 36.5 inches deep. The overall depth with the door open is 50.75 inches. Net weight is 550 pounds.

The unit uses 85 psi steam pressure and requires 1-2 BHP of steam.

To learn more, visit unipresscorp.com.

Cloud-based management

TORONTO, CANADA — Pivot is a technology platform for the professional cleaning industry, a comprehensive cloud-based drycleaning and laundry management software that provides point-of-sale, production, logistics, communication (internal and external) and billing solutions.

Pivot's cloud-based solution is compatible with most hardware. The company does not charge set-up or installation fees.

Pivot's integrated digital marketing tools give cleaners relevant data and the ability to deliver text and email offers directly to customers' smart phones and email accounts. It is adaptable to any type of business, one location or ten, five employees or 500, a coin laundry or a couture drycleaner.

The company has announced that InterCap has completed a venture investment in Pivot's software. Pivot intends to use the proceeds to invest in engineering and customer service.

The team behind Pivot has over 35 years of experience in building businesses and innovating in North America's drycleaning industry, he noted, including managing Canada's largest franchise of drycleaners and its leading couture cleaner.

Pivot is currently offering a 45-day free trial.

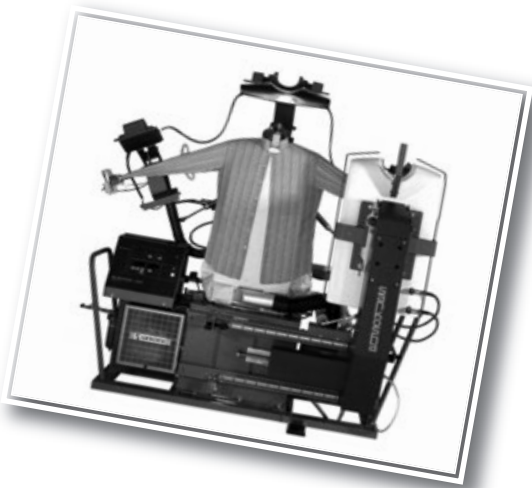
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NewsMAKERS



The staff of Wedding Gown Preservation Co. has received training from several industry experts. They included Dan Eisen (at left in the photo) on spotting, bleaching, wetcleaning and fabrics and Bob Edwards (standing next to Eisen) of A. L. Wilson on using the company's new chemical formulations. Jane Zellers also worked with the staff on management, plant efficiency and production. An OSHA representative trained the staff on chemical safety. Also pictured are Mike Schapiro (third from right), president of the company, with staff members Dawn Hromada, Tiffany Gay, Michelle Coish, Semka Karic, Amanda Spagenberg and Sheila

Garment Management Systems announced that ZIPS Dry Cleaners has agreed to include the QuickSort Automated Assembly System in all its new plant designs and to recommend the system to all existing franchisees.

The screening process was well underway when Drew Ritger became the new CEO of ZIPS Dry Cleaners late last year.

"Incorporating labor and space saving equipment that simplifies assembly is a no-brainer," Ritger said. "Providing the best model for our operators to be successful furthers our goal of growing the ZIPS brand nationwide."

Ritger, who has a background in franchising and growing profits, added that "space is a premium and the QuickSort Automated Assembly System reduces

the footprint of the assembly area. Less square footage in our new plants results in less overhead which in turn helps our new franchisees be more profitable."

Brett McLeod, president of Garment Management Systems, was excited about becoming the preferred vendor. "One price cleaners are successful because of their efficiencies and we are thrilled they want to include our production piece of equipment to help them be more efficient as well as save space," McLeod said. "Our mission has always been to provide dependable, accurate automation that is affordable."

To date, around 15 assembly systems have been installed with another five systems scheduled to be installed in the coming months.

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Steven Cantrell of Lynn Haven, FL, was selected as the recipient of the 2018 Textile Care Allied Trades Association college scholarship fund. He is the son of Glenn and Christie Cantrell, who both work for Jensen USA of Panama City, FL. Mariah, his sister, was the TCATA scholarship recipient in 2015.



Steve Cantrell

Cantrell was chosen from an outstanding group of applicants. Ranked 11 out of 370 graduating seniors in high school, he maintained a GPA of 4.50 despite a schedule of demanding courses. He was chosen to represent Beta Club at the Florida State Convention where he competed in math and was part of the Quiz Bowl team. He was also an active member of Mu Alpha Theta and the National Honor Society, received the principal's leadership award, and was named the Mosley Top Senior Science Student of the Year, among other honors.

He was also a member of the varsity baseball team for two years that achieved state runner-up status. While on the team, he and his teammates put together a workshop for disabled children to teach them the game of baseball.

Having already completed his freshman year at the University of Florida, where he made the Dean's List, Cantrell will continue there this fall, where he is majoring in Aerospace Engineering.

"I continue to be very impressed with the quality of the applicants that apply for the scholarship," stated Leslie Schaeffer, TCATA president. "The association is most pleased to provide assistance for outstanding students like Steven, and we all wish him the very best success in college and beyond."

Sheldon Fishman, owner of Fishman's Personal Garment Care in Calgary, Alberta, has been named Canadian Manager of the Year for Tailwind Systems.

Although Tailwind has been selecting a Manager of the year for nearly two decades, this is the first time for bestowing a Canadian Manager of the Year award.

The awards go to a manager that Tailwind's Don Desrosiers feels most understands the inner workings of running a drycleaning plant — a manager who "gets it," demonstrating that running a drycleaning plant is dynamic.

"The one thing that is the same in every plant that I've worked in, in any country in the world, every state in the union, is that every plant is unique in its own way," said Desrosiers. "There is something at every plant that has a particular nuance that I've never seen before."

A manager or owner who has worked in a plant for years must be ready, willing and able to adapt what they do to accommodate a new situation, a new volume level, or a new competitor, Desrosiers said.

"Every drycleaning plant has had to reinvent itself over the past decade or so," he said. "The economy has changed and still is changing. In most cases, the piece counts have dropped measurably. So how does a plant adapt? How does a manager react?"

"Usually, when a busy plant loses volume, all of the employees remain and they should be working fewer hours," he added. "The problem is that they often do not. The staff, consciously or subconsciously, pads the time clock and raises labor cost significantly. The staff may even blame you and think to themselves 'It's a lot slower here than it used to

be, and I don't know why, but I work 7-3.' That mentality, if allowed to take hold, is deadly."

The economy in Calgary has taken a hit over the past few years and when the price of oil falls, Calgary pays the price.

"Given the need for dynamic management, and seeing it in real time at Fishman's Personal Garment Care, the choice for the Canadian Manager of the Year is clearly Sheldon Fishman," Desrosiers said.

"I have been visiting Fishman's for many years. During the time between my last two visits there, many changes took place. Piece counts are down, but management proved up for the challenge."

Instead of waiting for business to return to "normal," Sheldon went about the business of transforming his generations-old company into the new normal, Desrosiers said.



Tailwind's Canadian Manager of the Year Sheldon Fishman with his wife Tasha.

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Event Schedule

Saturday, August 18



Maximizing Revenue Streams -
How to get Wash N Fold, How to Attract New Customers to New Services, Use of New Technology (Lockers/Apps)
Speaker: Chris Moreno
9:30am - 10:30am

Show Hours: 10:00am - 5:30pm



Critical Update:
CA HR & Employment Issues - Explore Latest News on Sexual Harassment in the Workplace, Minimum Wage Issues, Hiring & Firing Issues and More
Speaker: Jibit Cinar
10:30am - 11:30am

President's Reception
Renaissance Long Beach Hotel
5:30 - 7:00pm

Sunday, August 19



Marketing for Profit
Speaker: Kyle Nesbit
10:00am - 11:00am

Show Hours: 10:00am - 4:00pm



The Team Approach to Building Customer Service Excellence
Speaker: Jim Groshans
11:00am - 12:00pm

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LIVE Clinics on the Show Floor

Saturday, August 8

Shirt Finishing Clinic
Presented by Unipress
12:30 pm

Stain Removal Clinic
Presented by A.L. Wilson
2:00 pm

Laundry Clinic
Presented by Faultless Starch
3:30 pm

Sunday, August 9

Pants Finishing Clinic
Presented by Sankosha
12:00 pm

Stain Removal Clinic
Presented by R.R. Street & Co. Inc.
2:00 pm

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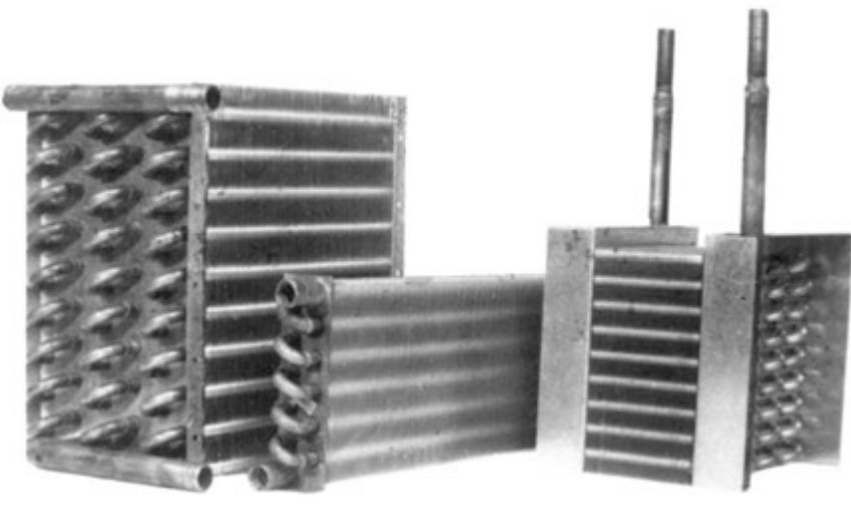
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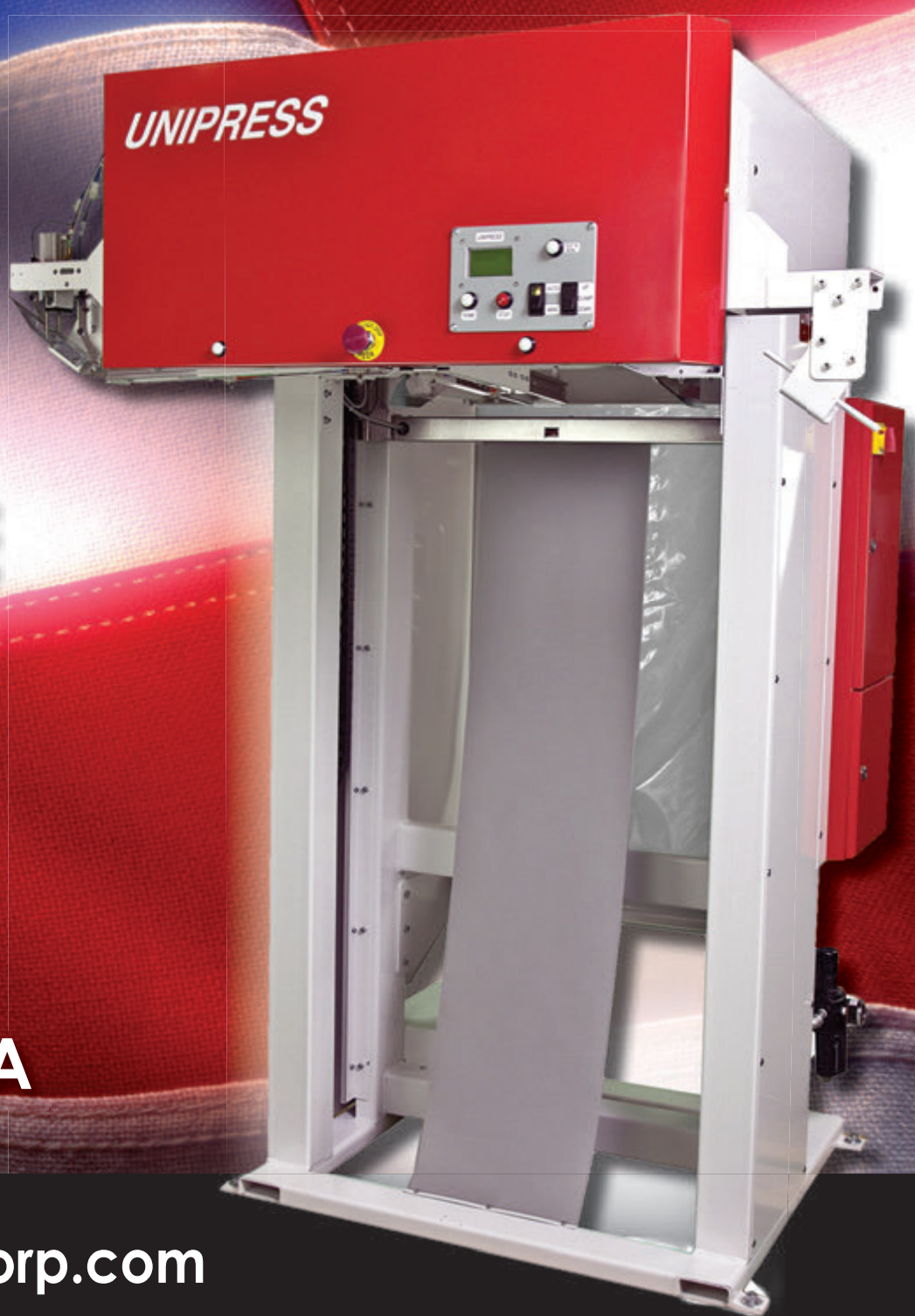
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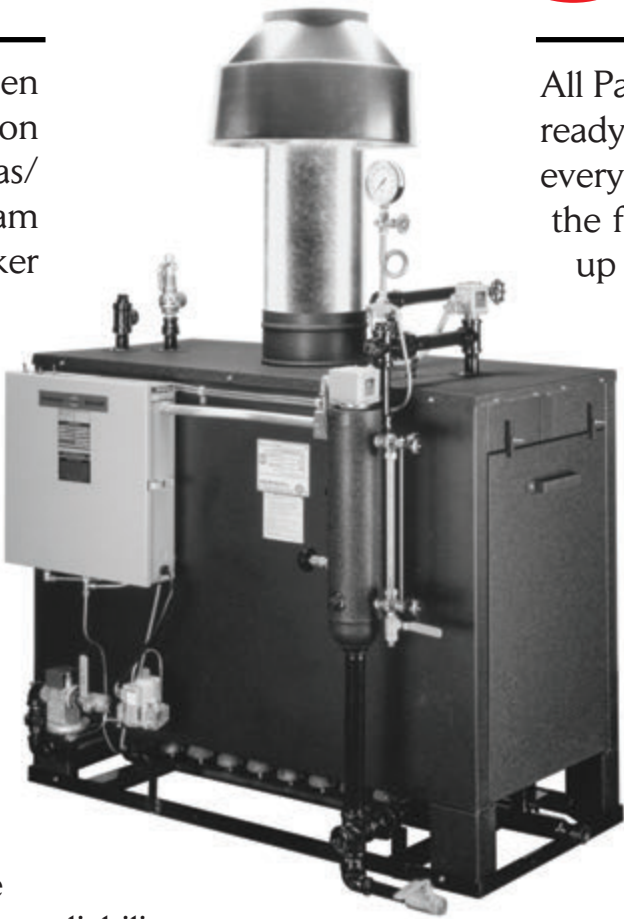
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