Title:
All Natural, Chemical Free At Home Dry Cleaning Methods

Word Count:
500

Summary:
This article highlights the environmental benefits of the latest home dry cleaning methods versus
dry cleaning methods which use harmful chemicals.

Keywords:
At-home dry cleaning, green dry clean, natural cleaning products

Article Body:
Perchloroethylene, better known as perc, is used by 80 percent of dry cleaners in the United States as a solvent to wash clothes that are “dry clean only.” Despite its effectiveness, the use of this chemical has been linked to a range of health side effects and has recently come under heavy public scrutiny. With heavy regulation from the Environmental Protection Agency, professional dry cleaners are seeking the use of a safer chemical—liquid carbon dioxide—to provide a green laundry alternative. At-home dry cleaning kits such as Dry Cleaner’s Secret are providing the option of affordable & environmentally safe dry cleaning, that cuts down the energy-burning, waste producing processes that the professionals use.

The first step to green dry cleaning is replacing harmful chemicals with natural cleaning products. Perchloroethylene (perc) is a synthetic chemical that is made from a reaction between ethylene and chlorine. Like many synthetic chemicals, it poses a threat to our health. Perc is a central nervous system depressant. Exposure to it can occur in the workplace or in the environment when it is released into air, water, land, or groundwater. It can also occur when people use products containing perc, spend time in dry cleaning facilities that use perc, live above or adjacent to these dry cleaning facilities, or bring dry cleaned garments into their home before they are properly aired out. Short-term contact can cause dizziness, headaches, nausea, and irritation of the skin, eyes, nose, and throat, while long term exposure poses greater threats, including liver and kidney damage and cancer.

Liquid carbon dioxide (CO2) appears to be the most practical green dry cleaning solvent to replace perchloroethylene. It is cheap, abundant, naturally

occurring and can even be recycled from the industrial wastes from the manufacture of chemicals such as ammonia. Most importantly, exposure to carbon dioxide has no health side effects. The only drawbacks for dry cleaning with CO2 are that it does not clean as well as perc does and the machinery needed to use it is very expensive, thus a higher price is past on to the consumer.

A virtue of environmentalism is moderation. That being said, green dry cleaning is best achieved if you do not dry clean at all or limit the use of professional dry cleaning by using at-home dry cleaning kits for garments with smaller spots and stains or that need to be freshened. Professional dry cleaning is a large process that uses a lot of energy and produces a lot of waste in the form of powder residue, sludge and wastewater. If the dry cleaner is still using perc (it is still allowed in most states), these substances are hazardous. At-home dry cleaning involves no more than a Dry Cleaner's Secret cleaning cloth and your dryer. There are no harmful chemicals involved and no waste.

While perc remains the most effective dry cleaning solvent, the use of natural cleaning products and at-home dry cleaning can only be beneficial to our health and our environment.

~ Ben Anton