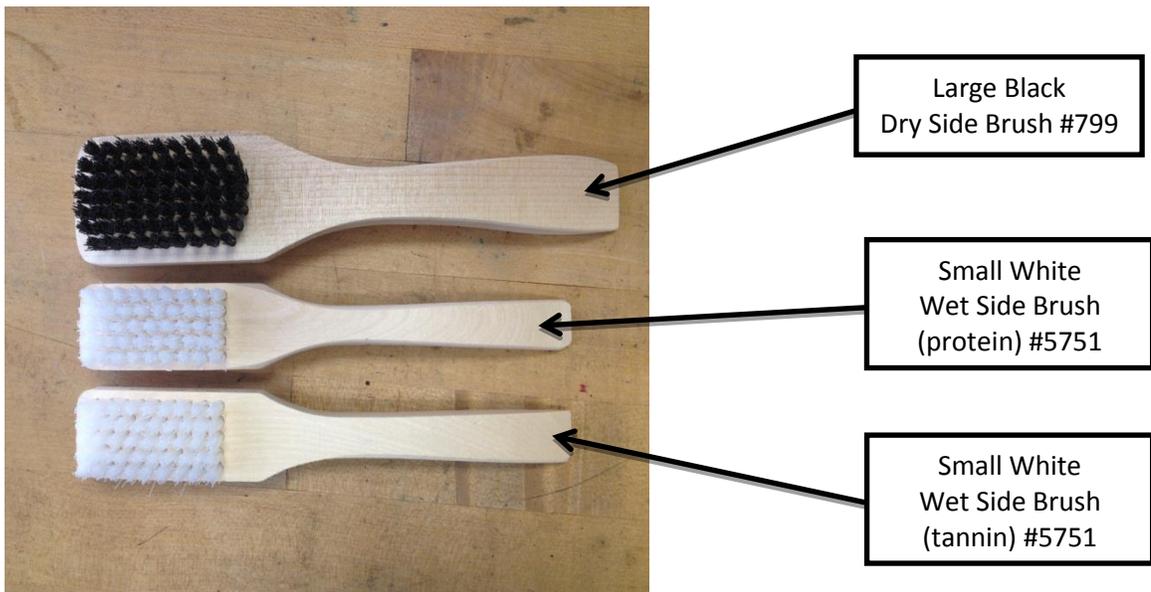


## Technical tips – spotting brushes.

9/17/2012

- Spotting brushes are used to provide mechanical action, helping the spotting agents penetrate the stain. A minimum of three brushes of different sizes and colors are needed for these tasks.
  - Black – usually large, for **DRY SIDE** agents only.
    - Dry side agents should not be flushed with steam so we need to keep this brush dry. Using a color different from the others is the best way.
  - White – usually smaller, for **WET SIDE, ALKALINE** agents (protein).
  - White – usually smaller, for **WET SIDE, ACIDIC** agents (tannin).
    - Protein and Tannin agents are PH opposites and can cancel each other out if one brush is used for all wet side spotting.
    - Using a color and size different from the dry side brush helps keep them separate. It even helps to mark them with a “T” (for tannin) and “P” (for protein).
- Spotting brushes should be kept vertically in a holder on the side of the board. If they do not have a holder then suggest that they lay the brushes bristles down. This will prevent spotters from penetrating the wood and help the brushes last longer.



## Technical tips – Solvent Levels

9/28/2012

One of the biggest issues in the Dry Cleaning industry today is low solvent levels. Be it Perc, High Flash Hydrocarbon or one of the other alternative solvents the working tanks of a growing number of dry cleaning machines are only half full, or worse. So what are some of the problems caused by low solvent levels and how do they affect operations?

- Excessive mechanical action during the wash cycle.
  - Can cause increased lint.
  - Potential for damage to sensitive/delicate fabrics.
- Poor solvent flow through the machine.
  - Can cause greying and redeposition.
  - Poor insoluble and water soluble soil removal.
  - Increased expenses for spot removal and re-cleans.
- The pump can cavitate and make high pitched sounds during the wash cycle.
  - Pump seal and impeller can wear, leak and stop working.
    - Pump replacement can cost over \$1000.
  - Loss of production costs.
- Solvent can overheat to over 90° F.
  - Can cause increased wrinkling.
  - Will cause increased dye bleeds.

Low solvent levels can cause damage to machines and garments. While trying to save a few pennies per garment dollars are slipping out the door. Also buy brand name solvent (in drums or pails) from a reputable supplier. Working tanks should be at least  $\frac{3}{4}$  full and distilled/clean solvent tanks should be  $\frac{1}{2}$  full.



## Technical tips – Dry Clean Detergents

10/31/2012

Contrary to the belief of some folks in our industry dry cleaning solvent alone will not completely clean clothes. Yes solvent will dissolve solvent soluble soils like oils and grease and even loosen insoluble soils like sand and dust but alone it will not have the proper effect on water soluble soils like soda and beer or the insoluble soils. The use of a detergent whether it's a Charge (Anionic) or a Load Process (Cationic) is needed to help remove soils and suspend them in the solvent. The suspended soils are then carried away from the garments to be removed from the solvent by the filters and/or still. Let's take a look at some of the functions of a dry cleaning detergent.

- Utilize moisture to remove water soluble soils.
  - Moisture enters the solvent through the garments or humidity in the air.
  - Detergents allow solvent and the moisture to mix.
- Control moisture to prevent.
  - Damage to dyes.
  - Wrinkling and shrinkage.
  - Bacteria growth.
- Removes insoluble soils.
  - Insoluble soils are often found in combination with other soils.
  - Using the moisture helps break insoluble soil loose.
- Suspends soils in the solvent.
  - Helps prevent redeposition.
- They also help minimize static and lubricate zippers.

The proper use of a detergent in the dry cleaning machine be it Streets or ADCO will only cost pennies but will save time and profits. Detergents should be used as per the manufactures recommendations, if not sure what they are contact the local vendor representative.





## Technical tips – Fabric Finish (sizing)

11/30/2012

Consumers bring their garments to the Dry Cleaners so that they can be returned to a “LIKE NEW” condition. However, while cleaners are concentrating on getting the soils out of the garments, more and more are overlooking proper pressing/finishing. This is where fabric finish or sizing comes in. Whether it is applied during dry cleaning, wet cleaning or sprayed on, sizing helps restore garments to a like new condition.

In dry cleaning we add sizing, liquid or beads, first to the solvent and then the garments are coated with the sizing during the wash. The liquid sizing is usually pumped into the machine and the beads are added by hand usually through the button trap. Wet clean sizings are in liquid form and are added the same way as starch, during the last rinse. They are pumped in or added using a flush system if the machine is so equipped. There are also spray sizings that can be applied at the pressing station. These come in spray can form but can also be mixed in bulk and applied using a pressurized spray tank.

No matter what process the garments go through, or the type of product used, sizings are an important part of the fabricare process. Let’s take a look at some of the benefits.

- Restores garments to like new condition.
  - Repeated wear and cleanings removes original finishes.
  - Sizing restores the “like new” look and feel.
- Helps resist wrinkling.
  - Sizing protects garments from over handling and crowding in closets.
  - Customers will be happier longer.
- Speeds up pressing.
  - Sizing makes it easier to return the like new condition to garments.
  - Faster finishing means more profit.
- Makes spotting easier
  - Sizing adds a protective coating that can make it harder for stains to set.
  - Less spotting time and chemicals saves money.

Sizing is an inexpensive way to get a leg up on the competition simply by giving the consumers better looking garments that will stay looking good longer. It could also help save time in the production process which saves money. Combo detergent/sizing products are attractive but when added separately they can be customized to the consumers liking. Regardless of the process or the garments, sizing will help improve business.

## Technical tips – Filter Gaskets

01/01/2013

Cartridge filters come in different shapes and sizes and are important in the cleaning of both garments and solvent. The filter paper catches the insoluble soils, the carbon catches dyes and the clay (absorptive material) catches NVR or Non-Volatile Residue. No matter what size or type cartridge is used the proper installation of cartridges is very important to ensure proper performance. This is where **GASKETS** come in. Also called felt spacers or felt seals, they are installed with the cartridges to prevent unfiltered solvent from flowing or leaking around the filters. With use, gaskets can compress, breaking the seal and allowing solvent to by-pass the filters. As we know, unfiltered solvent flowing back to the wheel can carry soils that can damage garments. Let's look at some of the effects this can cause!

- Excessive insoluble soils in solvent.
  - Can cause greying of light colored garments which is irreversible.
- Excessive NVR and dye in solvent.
  - Can cause streaks and swales.
  - Can cause odors.

Excessive low filter pressure can be a sign of missing or worn gaskets. Some gaskets are packaged with filters and some have to be purchased, but the cost of replacing the gaskets when we change our filters is minimal compared to the damage that can be caused to garments and reputations. Damage in any form means lost dollars, so when taking time out to change filters make sure the gaskets get changed also.



Examples of gaskets that have to be ordered:

NP-8 = PN# 4743

DS-142 = PN# 4652

VF-40 = PN# 4746

CS-80 = PN# 4650

Example diagram of Gasket installation



## Technical tips – Poundage Charts

02/01/2013

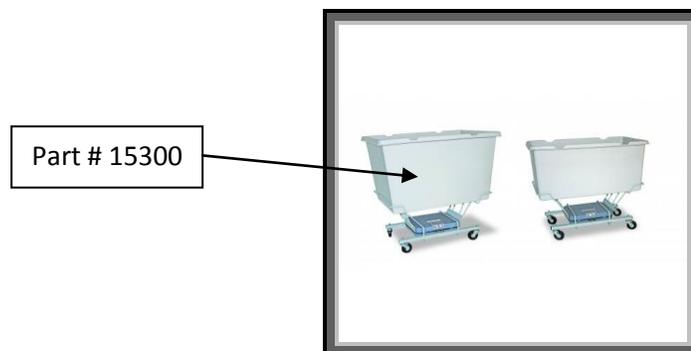
When should I change my filters?  
Am I using too much detergent?  
How do I figure out my cleaning cost per garment?  
How do I know if I am going through too much solvent?

These are questions that come up quite frequently in the Dry Cleaning/Laundry community. The answer to these questions can usually be figured out by the vendor representative and will vary from plant to plant, depending on machine type. Other info needed is the brand, type and cost of solvent, process chemicals used as well as the brand, type, cost and number of filters used. There is, however, one very important piece of info that is required to figure all this out. In gathering this piece of info we must answer the question with a question:

**“What is your Daily Poundage?”**

Keeping a record of poundage cleaned is essential to properly operate an efficient Dry Cleaning or Laundry operation. It can help us figure supply costs, how often we need to change filters, the life of pads and covers and even the costs associated with waste disposal.

A good scale is essential to help keep proper poundage records. While a fair portion of cleaners have scales, some of them do not work properly. Scales can be checked for accuracy easily and, if not working correctly, they should be replaced. There are several different brands which come in sizes and shapes that can fit any budget. We also can provide the poundage charts free of charge to help keep proper records. They are pre-ruled for each day and can be hung on the front of the machine as a reminder to weigh the loads properly. Below is an example of a common scale.





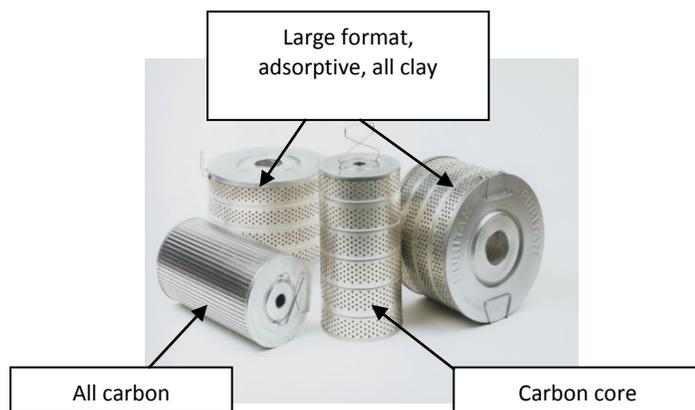
## Technical tips – Filters

03/01/2013

The basic principle of dry cleaning is the transferring of soil from the garment to the solvent, and then safely removing the soil from the solvent. Since soil-free solvent is essential to cleaning clothes, the second part of the process is very important. Filtration is used to help remove some soil from the solvent, making it safer to re-use the solvent load after load. During the cleaning cycle, solvent passes through the filters, where insoluble soil (such as lint) is removed by filter paper and soluble soil (such as dye) is removed by carbon. Some filters contain clay, which can absorb some NVR (non-volatile residue), such as grease. Cartridge filters come in different sizes and can be used in different combinations, but **MUST** be managed correctly in order to control soil. Let's look at what happens when cartridge filters are not managed properly.

- Filters clogged with insoluble soil can cause poor solvent flow which leads to:
  - Poor cleaning
  - Excessive lint and static
  - Graying of garments
  - Streaks and swales
- Used-up carbon/clay can lead to excessive dye/NVR in solvent which can cause:
  - Re-deposition
  - Graying of garments
  - Streaks and swales
  - Odors

Cartridge filter mismanagement can keep solvent from properly removing soil, which will cause garments to remain dull and unclean. It can also cause soil to redeposit onto garments, which can cause permanent damage. Bottom line, not changing cartridges will drive up the number of garments that have to be re-cleaned or drive off customers, which means **DOLLARS LOST**. How long filters will last depends on the amount and type of garments being cleaned, as well as the type and brand of filters used. To assure proper performance, filter pressure and solvent color must be monitored on a regular basis.





## Technical tips –Wet Cleaning

05/01/2013

Wet cleaning has been an important part of the fabricare industry for years. While dry cleaning is necessary and often the best way to restore garments to a like new condition, there are some circumstances that dictate the use of water. We have all seen care labels that say **do not dry clean** or **machine wash** and we have also seen some labels recommend **professional wet clean**. We have seen the change in clothing trends and know that our bread and butter, the business dressed crowd, has abandoned their traditional garb for more casual attire. Sometimes we see garments that are soiled to the extent that cleaning with water may be the only solution.

Whatever the case for Wet Cleaning, we owe it to the consumers to give them the best processed garments using the best products and processes. Wet Cleaning is not washing. Anyone can walk into their favorite store and buy a “fine washables” detergent and wash garments. Even if done by hand in a small wash tub, Wet Cleaning is a controlled specialized process. The average Joe cannot have a vendor rep program their machine for limited mechanical action, water levels and temperatures. They cannot control specific drying temperatures or finish garments on special equipment. Most important of all they cannot get the specialized Wet Cleaning detergents, conditioners or fabric finish needed for true Wet Cleaning. Let’s take a look at some characteristics of Wet Cleaning products.

- ❖ Detergents
  - Should be nearly Ph neutral.
  - Contain buffers.
- ❖ Conditioners
  - Impart a soft, supple feel.
  - Prevent static and lint.
- ❖ Fabric finish (sizing)
  - Imparts a crisp firm hand.
  - Dissolves completely and uniformly in water.

Wet Clean specific products are designed to help protect the garments and return them to a like new finish. Consult your FabriClean salesman for information on these products. Most chemical companies, both Dry Clean and Laundry, have full lines of these products and can get you set up. Remember cold water itself can be harsh, it made the Grand Canyon.

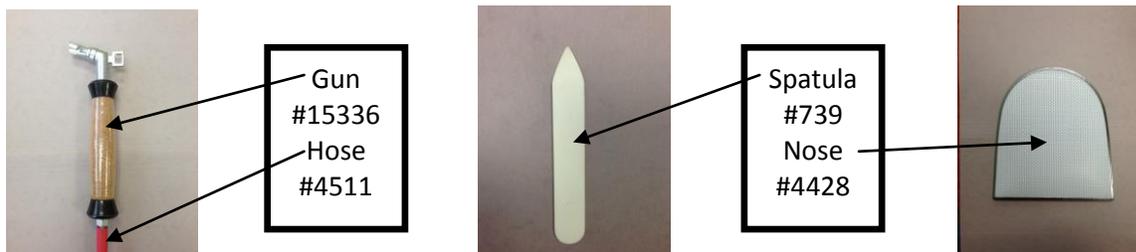
## Technical tips –Spotting Board Tools

06/01/2013

We all know that brushes are an important part of safe spot removal. However there are other tools and parts of a spotting board that need to be in good working order and used correctly. We have all seen folks using a steam gun one inch from a garment and the points of a spatula (bone scraper) being used to dig at a stain. What about that nose plate that would have cost \$13-\$14 bucks to replace instead the owner is writing a \$150.00 check to replace a silk blouse that was snagged? Nobody can afford accidents these days so let's take a look at these items and how we can prevent unnecessary loss.

- Steam gun – used to flush chemicals with steam and dry with air.
  - Inspect cork handle daily for cracking.
    - Replace when broken.
  - Use 4 inches from garment.
    - 4" = 110<sup>0</sup>F, tip = 300<sup>0</sup>F.
  - Use gun at a 90<sup>0</sup> Angle to the board.
    - We want to flush not spread the chemicals.
  - Also inspect the hose and replace when worn out.
- Spatula (bone scraper) – used to apply mechanical action.
  - **Not** intended to scrape/dig the stain out.
  - Use the flat edge to **Gently** work the chemical/stain.
- Teflon nose plate – used to cover the flushing area of the board.
  - Inspect daily for.
    - Sharp edges in the metal.
    - Holes in the Teflon.
    - Broken springs.
  - Replace when necessary.
  - **Do Not** work on a stain on the flushing area.

Things like bone scrapers and spotting guns being used incorrectly or hoses and nose plates being worn out can damage garments and cause the loss of profits and reputations. Ask your FabriClean salesman for info on these products.





## Technical tips – Alternative Solvents

07/01/2013

**Is Perc being banned? Is it still available?** Those are some of the questions being asked by those who are still using Perc. Even though it is still the most popular solvent and cleans very well, aging Dry Cleaning machines, increased regulations and solvent taxes are turning heads towards alternatives.

**Which of the alternatives is best for me?** That is another question being asked by Perc operators. Solvents such as GreenEarth, DF2000 (hydrocarbon) and EcoSolv (hydrocarbon) have been in the market for some time now with good success and others like Solvon K4 are gaining ground. Machine and solvent costs are huge considerations, but things like wash and dry times, fees/licenses, products required and solvent mileage should also be looked at very closely. Below is some information on alternative solvents.

- GreenEarth
  - Cycle length 60 min.
    - Wash time 17 min.
    - Dry time 35 min.
  - Average cost per gallon \$21-\$24
- Hydrocarbon (DF 2000)
  - Cycle length 1 bath 50-60 min, 2 bath 55-65 min.
    - Wash time 18-20 min
    - Dry time 28 min
  - Average cost per gallon \$13-\$14
- Solvon K4
  - Cycle length 1 bath 60 min, 2 bath 70 min.
    - Wash time 7-10 min
    - Dry time 48 min, with cool down.
  - Average cost per gallon \$31.

For more information on alternative solvents contact your FabriClean supply representative. Also the members section of the Dry Cleaning and Laundry Institute (DLI) website has great info on a wide range of topics including alternative solvents.



## Technical tips – Party Rental Spotting

05/01/2014

The increase in party rental facilities processing their own laundry increases the need for good spot removal chemicals and support. While professional laundry systems do a good job removing most of the soils, there is a need for help in removing tough stains. Things like candle wax or ink on table cloths, lip stick on napkins and food stains on chair covers provide an ongoing challenge not only for removing the stains but doing it in an environmentally safe way. Remember there are some spotting chemicals that are not water soluble and should not go down the drain and into waste treatment systems. Luckily the recent advances in biodegradable stain remover technology make the job of getting those linens clean easier and safer. Companies like A L Wilson have been leading the way with their Stain Wizard website and environmentally safe spotting agents. Several other companies have also come out with spotters that are safe for the washer. Below are some examples of spotters and what they can be used for.

	<b>Candle Wax</b>	<b>Lip Stick</b>	<b>Food Stains</b>	<b>Wine</b>	<b>Ink</b>
<b>A L Wilson</b>	Laundry TarGo Ink Go	Laundry TarGo	QwikGo Laundry TarGo	BonGo RiteGo	InkGo Laundry TarGo
<b>Streets</b>	Pyratex LV	Pyratex LV Wet Dry	StreePro Wet Dry	StreeTan WetDry	Pyratex LV Wet Dry
<b>Adco</b>	Release LDY Wetspo	Release LDY Wetspo	BPR Wet Spot	Super Tan Gen Formula	Release LDY Wetspo

All spotting agents must be used with caution for the fabric and proper safety equipment for the user and ALWAYS follow the manufacturers/products directions.



Link to A. L. Wilson Stain Wizard

Also visit [www.ALWilson.com](http://www.ALWilson.com)  
[www.4streets.com](http://www.4streets.com)  
[www.adco-inc.com](http://www.adco-inc.com)