



National

# Clothesline

July 2020

Volume 61 Number 10

www.natclo.com

## Keep on teaching



Classes at the Drycleaning and Laundry Institute had to be canceled for July but that hasn't stopped DLI's education programs. Brian Johnson, director of education at DLI, has been leading a series of on-line classes covering a variety of stain removal issues. The format allows an up-close look at how he is treating the stains and the Facebook format lets participants ask questions. The video sessions, along with other useful information, can be found on DLI's Facebook page.

## More recovery as PPP rules ease up

As the nation slowly emerges from a shutdown due to the coronavirus, drycleaners were showing some recovery from seeing business off as much as 80 percent in April.

Meanwhile, a new round of rules from the Small Business Administration concerning loan forgiveness under a revised Payroll Protection Program provides more flexibility by reducing the amount of a PPP loan that needs to go to payroll expenses and loosened requirements for meeting the terms of loan forgiveness.

Congress voted nearly unanimously to pass the revised version of the Paycheck Protection Program Flexibility Act of 2020 and President Trump signed it on June 5.

Among the provisions, the bill extended the period in which the funds must be spent from eight to 24 weeks, or until December 31, 2020, whichever is first.

Any funds not used for quali-

fying purposes within that "covered period" are not eligible for forgiveness and must be paid back, but the restrictions on how much of those funds must be spent on payroll costs has changed, too.

In the initial version of the program, 75 percent of the loan had to be spent on payroll costs to qualify for forgiveness. Congress changed the payroll cost rule to 60 percent which makes it easier to have a PPP loan forgiven.

The remainder of the loan amount, now at 40 percent, can be spent on other qualifying expenses like mortgage interest, rent and utilities.

Under the new law, businesses now have until December 31, 2020, to rehire workers in order for their salaries to count towards forgiveness. The new law also specifies that loan forgiveness will not be reduced if there's a reduction in headcount if borrowers can demonstrate that they were unable to rehire employees or hire similarly qualified employees for unfilled positions before December 31.

With loan forgiveness amounts for non-payroll expenses extended to 24 weeks, it should be easier to meet loan forgiveness thresholds. The new law also gives special consideration to businesses that could not operate because of required shut down, but cleaners, for the most part, were classified as "essential business" and thus could remain open despite a lack of business.

The first round of PPP loan money went fast, leading Congress to authorize a second round of funding which, as of mid-June had not run out. SBA said it still had more than \$120 billion available in the program, but the application deadline was June 30. Like many aspects of the program, that could change.

SBA reported that there have been 4.47 million PPP loans totaling more than \$512 billion by June 12. Nearly two-thirds of the loans have been for \$50,000 or less; they accounted for 11 per-

Continued on page 8

Continued on page 8

## New survey reveals what drycleaning customers are thinking right now

More than 350 people virtually attended a free webinar presented by the Southern California Cleaners Association and the Drycleaning Laundry Institute in mid-June to listen to Jeff Schapiro, president of Cleaner's Supply, deliver a program on "Understanding What Your Customers Are Thinking... Before, During and After COVID-19."

Without a crystal ball in his possession, Schapiro instead based his observations of the present and future on a recently conducted poll from Drive Research, a market research company from New York.

"What I'm about to share with you is a very extensive research study that was done with over 1,000 consumers," he explained. "To participate in this study, they had to have used a drycleaners in the last 12 months. To ensure accuracy of the data, this was taken across the United States with a cross-section of demographics."

The Dry Cleaning Consumer Pulse Report broke down people into four main categories: best customers who come to the cleaners multiple times per month; those who visit once a month; those who visit every two to three months; and those who visit less often than every three months.

Surprising results followed, starting with what customers perceive as the most critical aspect when choosing one drycleaner over another. Respondents could pick multiple answers on this question and many others.

While it was not a shock that "location, location, location" is still the number-one driving force for all four demographic groups, it was surprising how close behind other reasons such as quick service, price and customer service were, especially for more frequent customers.

For example, 44 percent of the best customers chose location, while 43 percent of the same group chose quick service, 35 percent chose price and 34 percent chose customer service.

In other words, people who dryclean more often tend to look at the business as a whole, rather than focussing on one factor. The other three reasons for choosing one cleaner over another, which make up the bottom of the list in all four categories, included offering pickup and delivery, taking sustainable measures and offering a coupon.

The study also compared customer expectations broken down by generation group and, as it turns out, Gen Z is the most demanding demographic of customers. Sixty-one percent polled believe garments should be ready in one day or less (compared to 56 percent of Millennials and 26 percent of Baby Boomers). So, taking too long to turnaround garments could cost you younger customers.

Schapiro also noted that "men and women can finally agree on one thing." While 59 percent of your best customers (with three visits or more a month) expect their clothes to be ready in one day or less, there was not a big gender divide on speedy cleaning. In all, 49 percent of men and 44 percent of women both expected garments ready in one day or less. The two gender groups remained virtually even with longer turnaround times, as well. Men and women who expected garments to be ready in two days was 26 percent and 28 percent, respectively; three days, 15 percent men and 17 percent women; and four days, 6 percent men and 5 percent women.

One positive takeaway from the report is that only 35 percent of



### Sneak Peek

#### 6 Driven to succeed

Looking to the post-COVID future, Danny Bahlman recalls the history of his 75-year-old family business.



#### 10 Planning to survive

Volume is down and may not return to last year's levels. James Peuster wants you to consider how you will be among the survivors.



#### 22 Time to evolve

Everything is always changing. The key is to see the changes and adapt your business in ways you can benefit from them.

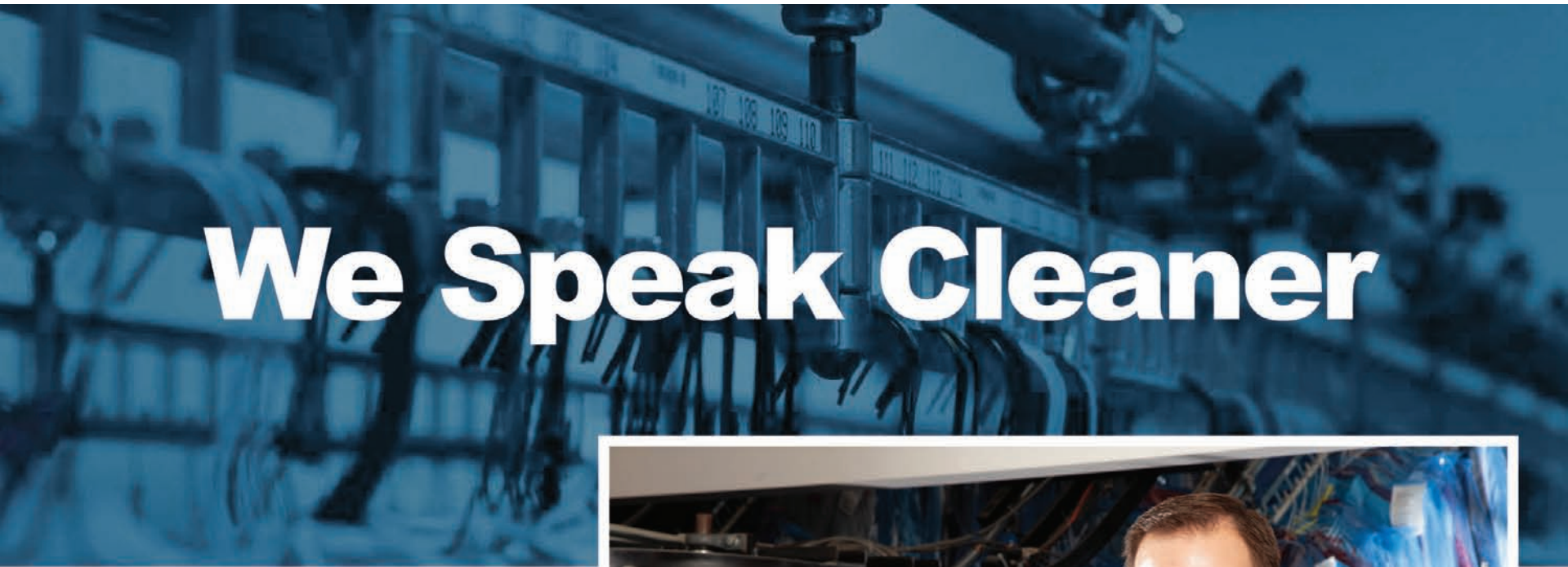


#### 24 Document carefully

When firing an employee, it's not only important to have documentation, but also to have the right kind.







“Since 2009 CBS has given me consistent updates and easy to understand tech support”



## Solutions

- **Suite of Features**
  - Our feature-rich software will help you run all aspects of your business more efficiently and effectively.
- **Industry Solutions**
  - Our Solutions are used across the dry cleaning industry including full price, route services, prepay and more.

## Support

- US based support with trained live agents
- Independently owned and operated for over 20 years.

**Contact Us  
for a FREE DEMO!**



Workstations



Microsoft Surface POS

**Visit our website: [www.cleanerbusiness.com](http://www.cleanerbusiness.com)**



Cleaner Business Systems • 414 Gateway Boulevard  
Burnsville, MN 55337  
**800.406.9649**  
[www.cleanerbusiness.com](http://www.cleanerbusiness.com) • [sales@cleanerbusiness.com](mailto:sales@cleanerbusiness.com)





# STEINER-ATLANTIC

Laundry, Boilers, DryCleaning, Equipment, Parts, Services

Since  
1959

## Has it NOW...



All Solvents:

- Hydrocarbon • GreenEarth • K4
- Gen X • K-Tex • Intense • Sensene

UNIPRESS



**Hurricane HS-2**  
Double Buck Shirt Unit



**Fulton**

Boilers—all sizes in stock



**Miele**



Wet Cleaning Washer and Dryer

Largest Parts &  
Equipment Inventory  
in the U.S.

*...at very competitive prices!*



**CLEAVER BROOKS**  
The power of commitment.

**GREEN-JET®**

**Forenta**

UNIPRESS



**Miele**

**Alliance**  
Laundry Systems  
**IPSO**

**Fulton**



# STEINER-ATLANTIC

**FAST**  
OVERNIGHT SERVICE

**CALL NOW • 800-333-8883**

Visit our website: [www.steineratlantic.com](http://www.steineratlantic.com)





A national newspaper  
for drycleaners and launderers  
July, 2020  
Volume 61 Number 10

# Getting it right for your customers

During a recent DLI/SCCA sponsored webinar by Jeff Schapiro, president of Cleaner’s Supply, some interesting industry tidbits were revealed from the Dry Cleaning Consumer Pulse Report taken in early June. It was the first major drycleaning consumer poll conducted since, well, perhaps decades. The last major industry study commissioned that we can recall was by Procter & Gamble in the late 1990s when they utilized that information to strategize an approach for their new “home drycleaning” product Dryel. Of course, Dryel flopped as consumers realized it was a product that refreshens without actually cleaning. Still, one would hope that the more recent study could lead to better results for drycleaners who now have solid information on what’s going on in the minds of drycleaning consumers during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Even though things have slowed down in recent months, it is still imperative that cleaners strive for fast turnaround times. After all, 43 percent of the best customer group (those who visit cleaners multiple times a month) cited quick service as their second most critical factor when choosing one cleaner over another, trailing by only the slightest of margins to the top reason, location, which 44 percent of that group indicated was crucial. It should be noted, quick turnarounds of one day or less are critical to a large portion of your customers, especially Gen Z (61 percent) and Millennials (56 percent).

For those who think a lower price is a big part of consumer decision-making, it is, but it only ranked third in the minds of the best customers with 35 percent— compared to 34 percent who emphasized customer service as a major determiner of where they clean their clothes. In terms of cleaning clothes, laundry services are ripe to grow at this time. A total of 36 percent of drycleaning consumers in the report expressed an interest in wash, dry and fold services with their motivation being to save time (65 percent) and that the professionals would do a better job (47 percent). Also, men are three times more likely to be interested in this service.

Perhaps the most stunning statistic in the study was that 61 percent of current drycleaning consumers believe drycleaners charge for pickup and delivery service and another 8 percent were unsure. For cleaners who offer the service for free, that means almost 70 percent of their customers could be unaware that they aren’t paying for it. Schapiro recommended informing customers that the service is free through marketing, but how should you communicate that fact? Well, 64 percent of best customers prefer email and over half of them are fine with text, Facebook or through the company’s website.

In terms of how drycleaners should proceed in the COVID-19 era, the most important thing you can do right now is make your customers feel safe by demonstrating precautionary measures in place such as wearing masks, sanitizing the store, offering contactless payment and encouraging customers to call ahead so you can take the order out to their vehicle. If you don’t do this, you stand to alienate 83 percent of your best customers who believe that safety and sanitation are of paramount importance.

Being forewarned is forearmed. This information is an absolute gift to the industry in a time when it is needed the most. Now it is up to drycleaners to successfully adapt their businesses to these new consumer preferences. Good luck out there.

# They were just trying to help

The old saw, “We’re from the government and we’re here to help,” comes to mind when considering the federal Payroll Protection Program. It was passed by Congress with good intentions, but lets face it, it was went through at a record pace and was not clearly thought out. And then there was the implementation. You could call it a train wreck, but this train was never on the track to begin with.

To get one of these loans, borrowers had to apply through a bank. The bank in turn would submit the application through an Small Business Administration portal for approval by the agency. But banks were unprepared for the onslaught of applications. They had to set up processes to accommodate online applications since doing business in person was off the table. And the SBA portal had a tendency to crash. So even assuming you could get all your paperwork in order for the application, getting it submitted was a huge hurdle for many. Many got over that hurdle eventually and got their PPP loan. Problem solved? Nope. In order to have your loan forgiven, you had to maintain payroll over an eight-week period, which meant paying employees to do little or no work. With businesses shut down and people being told to stay at home, even “essential businesses” like drycleaners suffered drastic drops in revenue.

Apparently the original thinking was this COVID-19 problem would be solved in a couple of months and everything would go back to normal. And of course, it didn’t. So now the PPP money has run out for many businesses and, just as business begins creeping back upwards, you’re stuck with a payroll that still can’t be supported by the slowly rising revenue. Or you have to lay people off, which the program was intended to prevent.

So now the government has realized that the program needed to be revised and Congress passed a second version that extends the covered period to 24 weeks instead of the original eight and reduces the amount of the loan that must be used for payroll from 75 percent to 60 percent. Business groups had recommended something along that line back when the program was starting up and if those had been the original terms things may have worked better. Business owners would have been able to adapt the program to fit their particular circumstances. Drycleaners, for example, could have adjusted their staffing based on actual needs rather than trying to meet the program’s original requirements.

We suspect there will be more changes and they may actually get it right eventually. But at this point the “help” from the government added more layers of anxiety, confusion and, of course, paperwork for already beleaguered business owners.

BPS

communications inc.

Publisher of

NATIONAL CLOTHESLINE

1001 Easton Rd., Suite 107

Willow Grove, PA 19090

Phone: (215) 830-8467

Fax: (215) 830-8490

info@natclo.com

Web: www.natclo.com

PUBLISHER

Carol Memberg

EDITOR

Hal Horning

CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Chris Pollay

MANAGING DIRECTOR

Leslie Schaeffer

ADVERTISING

Richard Cappel

GRAPHIC DESIGN

Mary Castro-Regan

NATIONAL CLOTHESLINE is not owned or operated by any national or regional trade association. Advertisers are solely responsible for statements made in their advertising.

NATIONAL CLOTHESLINE (US ISSN #07446306) is an independent trade newspaper published monthly by BPS Communications Inc. Periodical Postage paid at Willow Grove, PA, and at an additional mailing office. Postmaster: Send address changes to: The National Clothesline, 1001 Easton Rd., Suite 107, Willow Grove, PA 19090.

•Subscription price for anyone actively engaged in the drycleaning and laundry industry in the United States: \$35; Canada \$40 (US); All others, \$75 (US).

© 2020 BPS Communications Inc.

## Contents

### News & Features

- 6
- Driving forward COVID-19 is just the latest challenge for Danny Bahlman’s 75-year-old family business
- 22
- Ready for re-opening As business slowly picks up, you will have to adapt your business to the changing times

### Departments

- 20
- Dateline
- 23
- Newsmakers
- 26
- Classified advertising

### Columns

- 10
- James Peuster Your future depends on you’re doing routes right
- 12
- Bruce Grossman How does your boiler control the heat it generates?
- 14
- Don Desrosiers The math never lies when it comes to your production numbers
- 18
- Dan Eisen Chemical manufacturers often use different formulations for their spotting products
- 24
- Frank Kollman When it comes to documenting bad employee behavior, don’t sugarcoat the language



# How Many Dry Cleaners Has Your Insurance Agent Handled? One or Two? Three?



We've personally handled insurance for **thousands of dry cleaners!**  
We've already dealt with most any issue your business is likely to face.  
If you have any questions about insuring dry cleaners, we can and will give you a prompt, clear answer.  
Skeptical? Call us with a question and find out for yourself.

*There's more: We're just three members of NIE's team of experts.  
NIE has been handling fabricare insurance since 1915!*



**Anne Cobb**  
Customer Service and Sales  
[Anne@NIEinsurance.com](mailto:Anne@NIEinsurance.com)



강 명순 입니다. 지금, 연락만 주십시오.  
Director of Korean Operations  
[Kang@NIEinsurance.com](mailto:Kang@NIEinsurance.com)



**Ann Hawkins**  
Vice President  
[Hawkins@NIEinsurance.com](mailto:Hawkins@NIEinsurance.com)

## Quote Request

Business Name			
Mailing Address		<input type="checkbox"/> Individual <input type="checkbox"/> Corporation	
City State Zip Code		<input type="checkbox"/> Partnership <input type="checkbox"/> LLC	
Phone (      )		FEIN:	
Fax (      )		<b>Building Construction*</b> 1. Frame 2. Masonry w/Wood Frame 3. Metal w/Metal Roof 4. Masonry w/Metal Roof 5. Fire-resistive - Precast Concrete Roof	
Contact Name			
Email Address			
Current Policy Expiration Date			
Today's Date	Location 1 <input type="checkbox"/> Plant <input type="checkbox"/> Drop Store <input type="checkbox"/> Coin Laundry	Location 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Plant <input type="checkbox"/> Drop Store <input type="checkbox"/> Coin Laundry	Location 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Plant <input type="checkbox"/> Drop Store <input type="checkbox"/> Coin Laundry
Street Address			
City State Zip			
Building Construction*			
Building Value			
Personal Property Value			
Gross Annual Sales			
Long Term Storage Value			
Type of Solvent			

“Devoted **100%** to Insuring Small Business Since 1915”

NIE Insurance • 6030 Bancroft Avenue, St. Louis, MO 63109 • 1-800-325-9522 • fax (314) 832-6775 • [www.NIEinsurance.com](http://www.NIEinsurance.com)





# Going the distance

In early June, Danny Bahlman succinctly discussed the current state of his Bahlman's Cleaners business in San Angelo, TX. "Actually, we had a pretty good day Monday... and then we had Tuesday and Wednesday," he said. "I told someone the other day, when you're lying flat on the floor and you can get into the sitting up position, that's improvement."

The business has been in the Bahlman family for 73 years, ever since Melvin, Danny's uncle, purchased the store in the Texan town of Robert Lee, populated by about a thousand residents. In the early 1950s, though, Melvin moved the business nearby to Sweetwater, which had a much larger population. Still, he wasn't satisfied with the workload.

"My uncle decided that business wasn't where he wanted it to be, so he had an anniversary special," Danny recalled. "I remember the prices. He started drycleaning a pair of pants for 39 cents. A suit or a lady's dress was 69 cents."

The special worked very well (Melvin wrote that the \$100 income was a great week), so it became permanent. As more clothes came in, he bought a vacant lot behind the plant and built a 2,400-sq.-ft. plant. Then, as the years passed, he added drop stores in various towns in west Texas, driving to them daily to transport clothes back and forth in vans, a much cheaper prospect than building a plant.

Melvin's siblings, however, liked to tease him about having to drive so much. They told him he should hire his little brother and expand into San Angelo, a much larger community with a bigger customer pool. While it was just a joke to them, Melvin heard some great advice.

In June 1966, Melvin opened a San Angelo location and hired little brother Leon, Danny's father. It wasn't long before Danny chipped in, often from behind a steering wheel.

"When I got my driver's license, any minute I wasn't in school I was driving back and forth to Sweetwater," Danny laughed.

Nobody could ever accuse Bahlman Cleaners of not going the extra mile to find customers. Even when they purchased the biggest cargo vans on the market, the miles from all the trips piled on significantly. "We changed the oil in our vans every Friday because we were getting 2,700 miles a week on them," Danny said.

The first new van they bought only lasted 90 days. When an auto dealership employee commented that it looked in great shape for 90,000 miles, he was surprised to learn that it had actually logged 490,000.

In time, the Bahlmans tried to stretch more life out of their Dodge and Ford vans (whichever had the biggest come out in a given year), but they kept losing rear ends from hauling all that weight back and forth — and those were the days when new warranty packages lasted five years/50,000 miles. Keeping a fleet running was a costly venture, but one day the Ford dealership approached them with an

idea.

"The Ford dealer said, 'Hey look. You all buy a van a year from me. You don't do anything but put them in high gear and drive them down the highway. We're going to warranty this thing for 12 months — whatever the mileage is — we're going to warranty these 12 months,'" Danny said.

In 1977, Danny's father bought out Melvin, and he continued to keep an open mind regarding new sources of business. Before the end of the decade,

"And, in the middle of negotiation over Christmas — they would shut down everything for two weeks and go on vacation — we got a call: 'We hate to tell you this, but when we open back up, we're not doing fashion jeans anymore.' Merry Christmas! I had to walk out of the office and tell 47 employees that when they left on Friday, that's it."

Levi Strauss had filed for Chapter 11 and closed the plant suddenly; Bahlman Cleaners was left to figure out how to generate enough work for their new 7,000 sq. ft. building.

increase volume. Whether it's the 1940s or the 2020s, the company is always willing to go any distance to keep the work coming in.

Many cleaners might recognize Danny from his charitable efforts to Go Red for Women with the American Heart Association.

Danny's daughter, Anne, passed away over six years ago at the age of 30 as the result of ventricular cardiomyopathy, a rare congenital heart defect that is not preventable, but can be treat-

www.bahlmancleaners.com



## Danny Bahlman

Bahlman Cleaners was given the opportunity to handle a lucrative account for Levi Strauss in El Paso.

"There are very few plants that do 10,000 pair of jeans a year," Danny began. "We were doing 10,000 a day. Seriously."

The company required plenty of new employees and equipment (including 18 110-lb. dryers) to meet the challenge.

"Levi's, depending on the weight of the fabric, cuts 60 layers of materials at a time," Danny noted. "They used scissors — they look more like a saw than scissors, but they call them scissors — to cut as a single pair of jeans stayed together, so all the components stay together as a bundle. They didn't want the integrity bundle broke up if they could."

The washing process used little chemical, designed mostly to get rid of all the residual dye of the jeans, which the company pressed on drycleaning presses.

"We had a truck driver going back and forth to the Levi plant about four times a day," Danny said.

Levi Strauss was satisfied enough with Bahlman Cleaners to approach them about greatly increasing the amount of jeans they processed.

"Their executives had come down and liked our plant and what we were doing because we started with everything [equipment] new. We cleared it out. We came up with a workflow. They had five production plants doing fashion jeans in El Paso and said, 'You guys be ready,'" Danny recalled.

Bahlman Cleaners was more than ready, according to Danny. "We were in the middle of a contract with them, had land picked out, had equipment picked out, came up and designed the building so we could go up from 10,000 a day to 300,000 a week," he continued.

"It's kind of like where we are right now, in some respects," Danny noted. "So, we go over to the bank and say, 'This is what happened. We need some money.'"

Fortunately, the location happened to be positioned at the busiest section of the busiest street in town.

"We just built all of the building we could build. Before we had the slab poured, people were standing in line to lease space," Danny said. "We just put a drop store in what we needed and leased out three-fourths of it. Tenants have paid for that property. That location is still our busiest location."

Currently, Bahlman Cleaners employs over two dozen people with five locations in San Angelo, one in Sonora and one in Ozona.

"Our staff is 100 percent of what it was last year," Danny emphasized.

Of course, the past few months have proven exceptionally difficult to maintain that. "The coronavirus has hit everybody," Danny said. "The PPP loan helped a bunch."

The Paycheck Protection Program requires an employer to guarantee 75 percent of last year's wages for employees; unfortunately for Danny, last year was a busy one with lots of overtime pay. Still, the move has kept the doors to the family business open, even if work volume has significantly diminished.

"We did a lot of cleaning and painting and re-striping the parking lots," he explained. "We are doing a little better than 50 percent of what we did last year. The lowest we got down was... we were at about 35 percent the lowest week."

Like many cleaners in recent times, the majority of work has been laundry and household items. Taking a page out of the Bahlman family history book, Danny plans to explore new services to

able. Unfortunately, it is rarely screened for and caught in time.

Within an hour of hearing of Anne's death, over 100 people in San Angelo came out and offered a strong show of support for Danny and his wife Kande. When asked about how they could help in his time of need, he told them to go home, hug their children and tell them they love them. As time passed, though, Danny found himself asking a similar question... how could he help other families avoid a similar tragedy? So, he launched a screening awareness campaign, featuring the message "Anne is why" on specially printed hanger capes, along with the website goredforwomen.org.

The red hangers, made with the help of M&B Hangers, have been used to distribute the message every February (American Heart month) to customers. The idea is to incite curiosity that will lead to more heart disease awareness. He also hopes it honors Anne's memory.

Speaking of honors, it was a little over a year ago when Bahlman Cleaners was designated as a "Texas Treasure," a distinction given by the Texas Treasure Business Award Program for businesses that have provided job opportunities and support for the state's economy for at least 50 years. It was an amazing accomplishment, but Danny isn't done just yet.

When asked about what the future might hold, he said, "My answer is the same thing I saw last year, or this time five years ago — I don't know ... because tomorrow is a new day. On March 31, 2014, if I could look into the future I would know that my daughter was going to lay down and go to bed that night and not wake up. So, I don't know what the future is. I just know one thing about it... wake up and go full speed ahead. Don't look back."

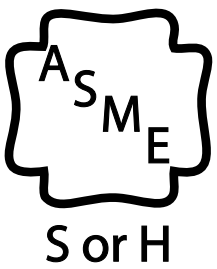


# Vertical Water Wall - Horizontal Drum Water Tube

9.6 to 24 HP Gas Fired - Pressures up to 200 PSI

## 100 Series

SCAQMD Certified to 1146.2



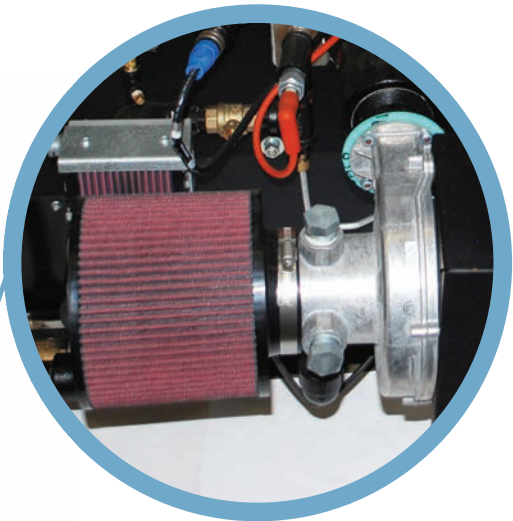
### Safety is Always a Priority

#### Safety

The Parker Boiler tube bundle is extremely flexible and offers a long life with a 25 year warranty against thermal shock.

#### Package Complete Boiler

Each unit is Factory Assembled & Fire Tested. 4 years of Field Testing.



### A Great Design Like No Other

#### Blower

Variable speed blower for electrical energy savings.

#### Efficiencies

Sealed Combustion Chamber offers efficiencies to 84% with low excess air levels.

#### Other Advantages

5:1 Burner Turndown Ratio. Digital Pressure Control. Boilers require access on two sides only. Reflex Prismatic Sight Glass. Up to 4" of insulation and 1/2" thick steam drum.



### Superior Quality & Value

#### Heavy Duty Boiler Tubes

Extra heavy boiler tubes 1-5/16" OD. minimum 0.12" (11GA) heavy thickness steel, built for long term service life.



NEVER A COMPROMISE FOR QUALITY OR SAFTEY

Tel: 323-727-9800  
[www.parkerboiler.com](http://www.parkerboiler.com)

5930 Bandini Blvd.  
Los Angeles, CA 90040



# More recovery as PPP rules ease up

*Continued from page 1*

cent of all loans by dollar amount. The largest chunk by dollar amount was in the \$350,000 to \$1 million range which represented 22 percent of the total but just over four percent of all loans.

**Charting recovery**

Over the past two months drycleaners have seen a modest business recovery. SPOT business Systems has been tracking the ups

and downs of business for hundreds of its drycleaners customers through the crisis. After a month of government ordered shut-downs, drycleaning sales were down to 75 percent from the same period a year ago. Since mid-April there has been improvement. By mid-June sales improved to being off 50 percent.

“This is a +27.9 percent increase from the reported bottom on 4/12/2020,” SPOT said in a posting to the Drycleaning and

Laundry Institute’s Facebook page.

“During the pandemic, the average route sales decrease has trailed the average counter sales decrease by a few percentage points,” SPOT also noted. “This weekend’s data display counter and route sales have converged at the -50 percent level.”

The SPOT graphs also show some regional variations in the recovery. The Southeast and Southwest regions have had the best re-

sults with store sales in those regions approaching only 40 percent off.

The recovery has lagged in the Northeast where sales were still off by more than 40 percent in mid-June. The Midwest and West regions were about even, both off about 50 percent, same as the national average.

Route sales are showing similar regional results with sales in the Southwest leading the way, now at less than 40 percent off

from a year ago.

Again the Northeast lags behind other regions with sales still off by 60 percent.

SPOT also has been tracking the time of day for store visits, information of interest to cleaners modifying their business hours. The most popular time of day for store visits appears to be early afternoon hours on weekdays. On Saturdays, that shifts to a bit earlier in the day, peaking at about noon.

# New survey reveals customers attitudes

*Continued from page 1*

customers who visit multiple times monthly feel price is that important when determining a drycleaner.

**The price factor**

In fact, when breaking down the issue of price by generation, there isn’t much variance at all: about 38 percent of Gen Z, 38 percent of Millennials, 35 percent of Gen X and 41 percent of Baby Boomers expressed concern over pricing as a major factor in picking a drycleaner.

The Dry Cleaning Pulse Report also revealed a few marketing opportunities for the industry.

One discovery in the study was that 61 percent of cleaning customers believe that there is an extra charge for pickup and delivery service. Another 8 percent weren’t sure if there was a charge.

For plants that offer free pickup and delivery, that means almost 70 percent of customers

are unaware that the service is free, a mistake that a marketing program can easily remedy.

Speaking of pickup and delivery, there is quite a gender disparity in those who are interested in the service. Men are twice more likely to be interested in pickup and delivery service.

Even though women expressed twice as much disdain for doing laundry at home than their male counterparts, men were three times more likely to be interested

to professional cleaners will obtain a better result.

For those hoping to strategize a marketing plan to advertise laundry services, aim for the two

wipe down counters and other surfaces that people touch, he noted. Having customers text ahead of time when they are picking up is also an excellent idea so employ-

## A whopping 83 percent of the best drycleaning customers said that feeling safe and having sanitary practices in place is of paramount importance.

ity in those who are interested in the service. Men are twice more likely to be interested in pickup and delivery service.

Another group to target for the service are those in urban markets, who are twice as likely to be interested in pickup and delivery than those in suburban/rural areas.

**Wash-dry-fold market**

Schapiro also examined wash, dry and fold service and those results were a bit unusual, too.

Overall, 65 percent of respondents ranked saving time as the biggest reason to have someone else do their laundry and 36 percent of the drycleaning consumers polled said they could be interested in wash-dry-fold service, meaning if you aren’t offering it, then you could be losing out.

Professional cleaners have one other advantage, as well: 47 percent of the people polled indicated that they believed sending laundry

youngest generations. Gen Z reported a 44 percent interest in the service while 55 percent of Millennials did the same. Gen X could also be a significant source of wash, dry and fold; after all, 32 percent expressed interest.

**Emails, please**

In terms of how you communicate with customers, the most preferred way of best customers is via email at 64 percent although Facebook, texting and through company websites were all slightly over 50 percent. Instagram (43 percent) and mail (34 percent) were less popular.

ees can take their order out to them in their vehicles. After all, the less contact the better, a concept that seems to fly in the face of long-held customers service practices, but then, this is new territory.

It should also be noted that 71 percent of the best customers indicated that they prefer a contactless form of payment, so keeping a credit card on file remains the best way to accomplish this.

### You closed 3 minutes ago. Bad for her, worse for you!



Owning an Iowa Techniques drop box means never having to say, “Sorry, we’re closed.” If you were your customer, when would you find time to come to your shop? If you don’t offer a convenient, 24-hour drop off solution for “after hours” customers, you are driving business to the competition. Get your drop box today!



One of the first purchases I made in my business was the 24-hour drop box from Iowa Techniques. Sixteen years later, that drop box is still working great and has never needed any kind of repair or service.

**-Mike Astorino, Fabricare Cleaners**

**Iowa Techniques**  
THE UNIQUE PRODUCTS PEOPLE™  
(800) 727+1592

**(800) 727+1592 | www.iowatechniques.com**

**More work at home?**

Towards the end of the presentation, Schapiro asked a million-dollar question that has been on everybody’s minds: Will more people be working from home now?

Once again, the answer is a bit complicated. It was noted in the Dry Cleaning Consumer Pulse Report that 34 percent of drycleaning consumers believe that their employer will be more open to allowing employees to telecommute after COVID-19. That would mean almost one-third of the workforce might drastically reduce their overall drycleaning volume.

However, Schapiro isn’t convinced that will be the case. He cited a survey conducted by OnePoll for Mattress Firm that revealed 6 out of 10 employees who currently worked at home admitted to taking a nap during work hours.

So, many employers may not be ready to openly embrace having staff work at home just yet.

The presentation concluded with a surprise pre-recorded message from Marla Gibbs, the actress who played Florence Johnston, the maid for the Jeffersons in the long-running TV sitcom of the same name.

“It’s really tough out there. I know what tough is because I used to work with George Jefferson himself,” she told the audience, before offering some advice. “Hang in there. Keep doing the best for your customers like you always do.”

**Keep it clean!**

A whopping 83 percent of the best drycleaning customers told Drive Research that feeling safe and having sanitary practices in place is of paramount importance.

“In this COVID-19 environment, conveying and showing safety measures within your store is most critical now,” Schapiro emphasized.

To allay those fears, he recommended that employees wear masks (including drivers) and should wear gloves or keep their hands sanitized. It is also wise to



# Sankosha USA is *family*

Many of our associates come from different backgrounds. Therefore, we have had the opportunity to learn about each other's culture and experience new ways of understanding and communication. We are so lucky because our customer base is also very diverse. We are truly committed to helping our customers with their business and we are thankful for each and every one of them.

## LISTEN

*do not listen with the intent to reply but  
with the intent to understand*

## RESPECT

*one of the most sincere forms of respect is  
actually listening to what another has to say*

## UNITY

*together we will always succeed*

We do well when we *all* do well.

~Eleanor Roosevelt



1901 Landmeier Rd., Elk Grove Village, IL 60007  
TOLL FREE: (888) 427-9120 • TEL: (847) 427-9120 • FAX: (847) 427-9634

<http://www.sankosha-inc.com>





# THE ROUTE PRO

BY JAMES PEUSTER

## Plan to be among the survivors

**D**rycleaning may never be the same after 2020. This is pretty much what everyone in our industry is saying on the dozens of conference calls, forums and in-

dustrial chats. The pandemic has caused all of us to feel ever more chaotic and I am not sure I can promise that everyone reading this article will be around go-

ing into next year. So here is the 411: those without routes are probably destined to struggle for the foreseeable future. Our company continues to

field calls from many of you who are either struggling with routes or are just now getting started. We have always stated "Do routes right or not at all." Now

we may have to go with "Do routes right or you have no chance at all."

Industry numbers show that routes have not been as affected as badly as stores. While most know that route customers spend an average of 25 percent more on the route than they do at the stores, now your chances of retaining them double as the "new normal" rears its ugly head.

So what does 2021 look like for anyone who has the ultimate crystal ball?

It is what many of you haven't thought about since we are dealing with changes monthly, weekly and daily and most of us are feeling overwhelmed while our sales are down.

Sure, it's easy for my company to sit at our offices cheer-leading our customers to stay positive; however, we do have firsthand experience at our home base.

Many of you don't know that three years ago we created Route Pro University for the sake of training owners, managers and drivers on our own territory.

In order to create our school, we had to actually start a route. Since then we have built our routes past the first van stage. So, I personally know what it feels to watch your drivers come back with fewer bags while other bags are holding a few items instead of being stuffed.

So, we all know that we need to look at our options for the future. I have been simply telling everyone that there may be a 25 percent decrease in volume once 2021 rescues us from this forgettable year. When 2008 affected our industry, we all witnessed a 20 to 25 percent decrease in sales.

However, 25 percent of drycleaners did not go out of business. Unfortunately, we may see one out of four operators looking for other options now. We also will see more vans in the field surrounding your stores and taking your best customers away from you.

The bottom line is this — do routes right, period. Your future depends on it.

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 information, call (816) 739-2066 or visit [www.therouteapro.com](http://www.therouteapro.com).

**We all know that we need to look at our options for the future. There may be a 25 percent decrease in volume once 2021 rescues us from this forgettable year.**



**Leading the way  
in the Environmentally  
Friendly Dry Cleaning  
EM Technology**

For over 40 years, Unisec has been manufacturing dry cleaning machines in Spain and selling them internationally.

Unisec is available through our distributor network or from New York Machinery directly. Please call us for a brochure or check out our website for further information.



### EM PRODUCTS

**Experience the quality of the  
GENUINE EM PRODUCTS**



**The ONE and ONLY  
Original EM Natura  
Cartridge Filters**

Made with high quality materials.



**EM Herb**

No worries over smells coming from the drums



**EM Perc**

Perc soap that reduces smell and cooking sludges



**Ninja Wet**

Only wet cleaning product that you'll ever need



**Pre-Spot**

Amazing effect of EM in pretreatment



**Stain Killer**

Water soluble, oil soluble, excellent protein stain elimination



**EM Hydrocarbon**

Product proven over 15 years



Since 1988  
[www.unisecusa.com](http://www.unisecusa.com)

973-375-1111  
[info@unisec.com](mailto:info@unisec.com)

**NEW YORK MACHINERY, Unisec USA headquarters**

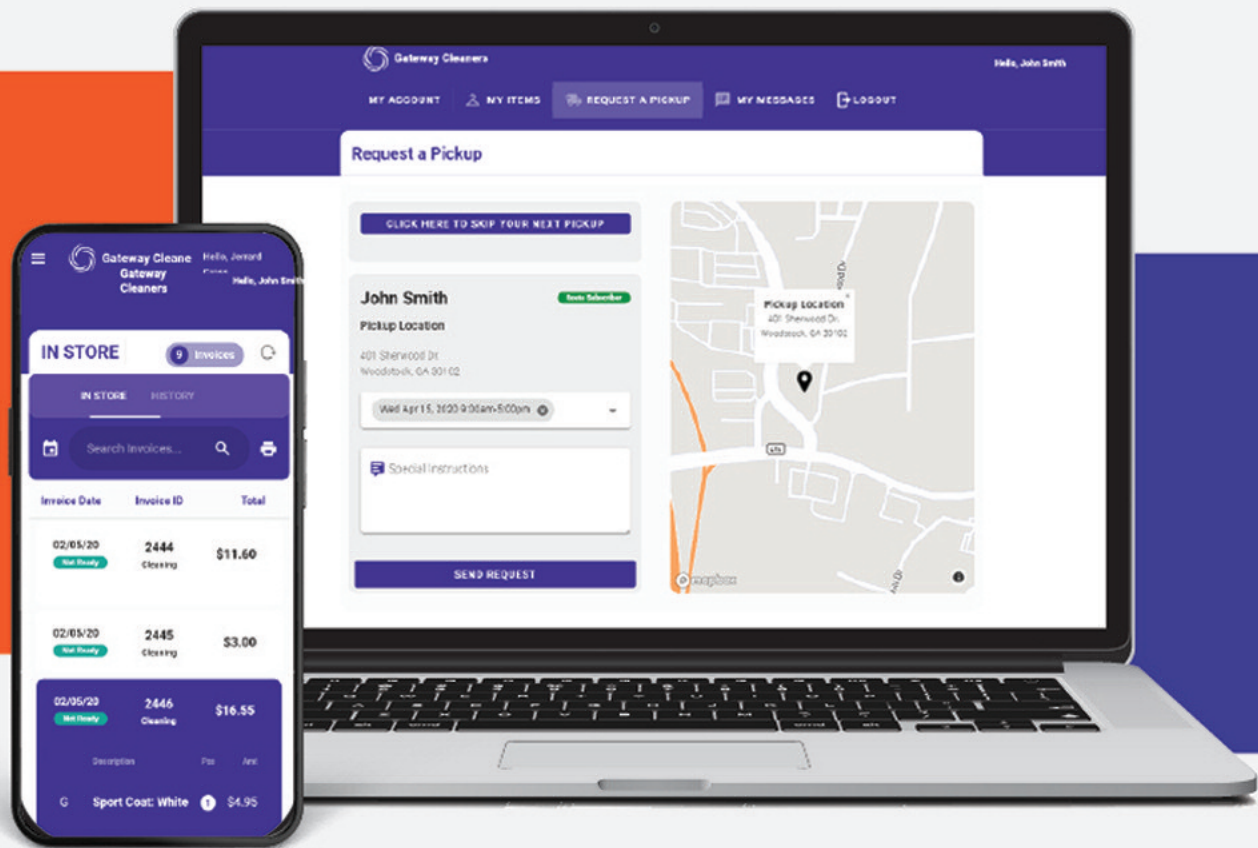
**CALL US FOR ALL YOUR EQUIPMENT NEEDS!** Please visit our website for a full list of our models.

New York Machinery has business experience for over 30 years. Partnered with Unisec, New York Machinery has been making Unisec affordable in the United States and Canada, for the past 6 years.





# Introducing Fabricare Customer Gateway



## Connect With Your Customers

Connect with your customer through our Fabricare Customer Gateway.



### Customer Messaging

Allow customers to send email and text messages directly to the store within the application.



### View Invoices

Our system allows your customer to view their past invoice history and current in-store invoices.



### Pickup Request

Allow on-demand and regular route customer to request their pick-up days based on location.



### Update Customer Info

Through the Customer Gateway, customers can update their account, preferences, and credit card on file information.

[fabricaremanager.com](http://fabricaremanager.com)

770.966.9323



# WRENCH WORKS



BY BRUCE GROSSMAN

## How a boiler's fire controls work

Last issue we took the necessary components and cobbled them together into a configuration that controlled the maintenance of the proper water level inside the boiler. That was half of the of the picture.

Controlling the fire or “firing” the boiler is the other half which. In this issue, I’ll be describing how the different components are organized into a safe and reliable system to convert the water inside the boiler into steam and maintain that steam within a specific pressure range.

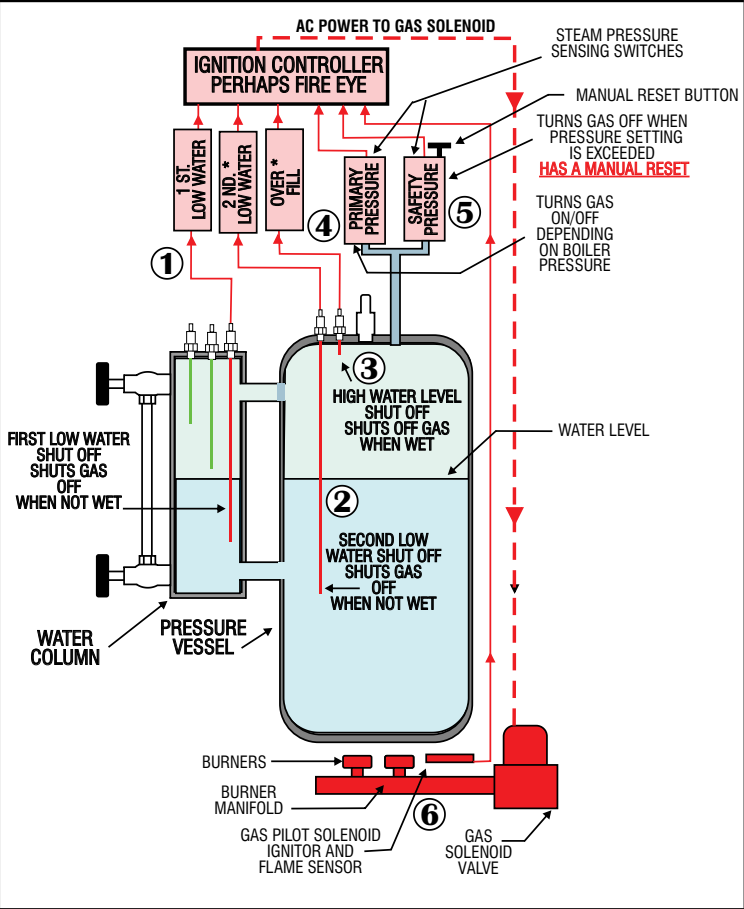
### Controlling the fire

Controlling the fire is accomplished by simply turning a gas solenoid (an electrically operated valve) on and off. Sounds simple but there a lot of things that need to happen to safely accomplish this.

An ignition controller is used to coordinate the activities of the different sensors used for this opening and closing of the gas solenoid.

These ignition controllers

### BUILDING A BOILER 4 FLAME AND PRESSURE CONTROL



may be called a Honeywell or Fire Eye (and other brand names depending on the boiler manufacturer).

Ignition Controllers usually do six things (refer to the numbers on the illustration):

1. The output from the first low-water sensor located in the water column is monitored.

When the level drops below the probe, the gas solenoid is shut off and an audible alarm is sounded.

When the level is at or above the sensor, the gas solenoid circuit is enabled (if other conditions are met, the flame will go back on) and the alarm will stop.

2. The output from the second low-water sensor located in the pressure vessel is monitored.

When the level drops below the probe, the gas solenoid is shut off and an audible alarm is sounded.

The alarm condition will continue until the level is at or above the sensor and a manually operated switch is pressed clearing the alarm condition. The gas solenoid circuit is then enabled.

If other conditions are met, the flame will go back on and the alarm will stop.

3. The output from the high-water sensor in the pressure vessel is monitored.

When the level is at or above the probe, the gas solenoid is shut off and an audible alarm is sounded.

The alarm condition will continue until the level is below the sensor and a manually operated switch is pressed clearing the alarm condition. The gas solenoid circuit is then enabled.

If other conditions are met, the flame will go back on and the audible alarm will stop.

4. The condition of the operating pressure control switch (see section 3 on illustration) is monitored.

This switch has normally closed contacts that open when a preset pressure in the pressure vessel is reached and which close again when the pressure drops to a preset amount.

The difference between the opening and closing pressure setting of this switch is called the differential.

Opening the gas solenoid valve can only take place if the operating pressure control switch is closed. This means the upper limit of the boiler

operating pressure had not been reached.

5. The condition of the high-pressure safety limit switch is (see section 3 on illustration) monitored.

This switch has normally closed contacts that open when a preset pressure in the pressure vessel is exceeded and requires a manual reset.

Opening the gas solenoid valve can only take place if the high-pressure safety limit switch is closed.

When this switch opens, it means the safety limit of the boiler operating pressure has been exceeded. Usually there is no alarm indicating this condition.

6. Gas ignition is monitored.

Before the gas solenoid valve is opened a smaller pilot solenoid valve is open and electric spark is used to ignite a small burner to act as an ignition source for the larger volume of gas released by the gas solenoid valve (see section B on illustration).

If after a short preset time a flame is not sensed the pilot solenoid valve is shut.

Ordinarily the ignition controller will try a few times for a successful pilot ignition then go to an alarm condition that will require a manual reset. Most ignition controllers provide a visual indication when an ignition fault has occurred.

Most ignition controllers have visible indicator lights. Use that super-duper smart phone to take a video of the light patterns while the boiler is operating properly. Referring to that video will go a long way in enabling you to troubleshoot ignition problems perhaps saving an expensive, unnecessary service call.

Bruce Grossman is the chief of R&D for EZtimers Manufacturing, maker of the new EZ Dose boiler compound manager and return tank level control which replaces that troublesome ball float valve in the condensate return tank. 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 more information on EZtimers products, visit [www.eztimers.com](http://www.eztimers.com). Address any questions or comments to [bruce@eztimers.com](mailto:bruce@eztimers.com) or call (702) 376-6693.

## Have You Ever Considered Selling Your Dry Cleaning Business?

- We are seeking to acquire dry cleaning operations within all 50 states.
- Convert your existing operation to a Lapels and let us assist with operations, marketing and support with our 21st century business model.
- In certain circumstances, we will help finance the acquisition costs.

Inquire for more details at [www.lapelsfranchise.com](http://www.lapelsfranchise.com), call 866-MY-LAPELS or email [sales@lapelsdrycleaning.com](mailto:sales@lapelsdrycleaning.com).

**Lapels**® Environmentally Friendly DRY CLEANING  
The Future of Dry Cleaning®





*we're all in this together*

*"Belief in the cure, belief in the future that awaits"*  
— Patrick Ness



"Like" us on Facebook and "Subscribe" to our YouTube Channel  
to see new product information and videos



FORENTA, LP  
185 Cold Creek Drive  
Morristown, TN 37814



**Made**  
in the  
**USA**

Email: [info@forentausa.com](mailto:info@forentausa.com)

[www.forentausa.com](http://www.forentausa.com)  
Phone 423-586-5370  
Fax 423-586-3470





# SHIRT TALES

BY DON DESROSIERS

## Letting the math work for you

Remember when you were in school, especially elementary school, and you learned math? The teacher presented problems like “75 is 40 percent of what number?”

What? If you’re like me, you surely asked yourself, or perhaps even the teacher, “When will I need this later in life?” Well, today’s the day that you get to apply what you learned all those years ago.

Today we will discover how math and math formulas play so heavily in productivity, plant layout and logistics in a drycleaning plant. I think that you’ll be amazed.

Have you ever wondered why you don’t get 50 to 60 pants per hour on your sandwich legger?

How do you calculate total plant capacity?

How do you synchronize the pressing department with the drycleaning machines?

Why precise equipment set up is vital.

When a plant is set up with two utility presses and one pants station — two drycleaning pressers — it is set up for maximum productivity. Why?

To figure a plant’s approximate capacity, start at the shirt unit.

Why do your drycleaning pressers underproduce? The calculations start with a scale cart in the drycleaning room.

If you bought a double leg-

ger (the kind that presses both legs at once), why didn’t your productivity change? Because of the math.

I warned you that there would be math involved. Let’s begin.

**Math and math formulas play so heavily in productivity, plant layout and logistics in a drycleaning plant. Follow the formulas and I think that you’ll be amazed.**

When I look at pressing productivity, I do not use the Drycleaning and Laundry Institute’s guidelines. It’s not that I disagree with them at all. I whole-heartedly endorse them and I think that everyone should know them and strive for them.

My usual goals are lower simply because I am trying to illustrate that even when you aren’t at the apex, you will still run an efficient and profitable shop and still have room to improve. You don’t have to hit a grand slam to win the game.

I think that a pants presser should press 40 pants per hour, a utility presser should press 30 pieces per hour, single buck shirt presser; 45 shirts per hour and 90 with two people on a double buck.

You don’t have to agree with these, but know that they are lower than DLI’s targets and are somewhat conserva-

tive. You probably aren’t getting those numbers. I’m here to tell you why.

Let’s begin with the premise that pants are 40 percent of your total drycleaning pieces. Everyone that has questioned

that statistic learns, after generating a report or two, that they, too, are right there within a point or two.

So, in a batch of 100 garments, 60 of them are not pants. If you have a plant with two utility presses and one pants press, the latter handles 40 pants, and the two utility pressers take care of the remaining 60 pieces.

It doesn’t matter if each does 30 or one does 25 (linens and more difficult items) and the other does 35 (sweaters, ties, etc). The math says that two of the pressers combine to do 60 percent of your garments, while the third does the remaining 40 percent.

I love it when three pressers combine to do 100 pieces in one hour — easily do-able and below DLI’s targets — but it doesn’t really matter if it takes longer than an hour to do those 100 pieces, as long as the

math proportions work out.

Assuming 100 pieces per hour with three people, that averages out to be 33 pieces per presser per hour — 33 pph. (More on that later.)

If you have one utility press

however. The pants presser also does easy pieces; items that only need up-steam like sweaters, ties, belts, etc. This evens out the piece count between the two pressers. It’s a reasonable work-around, but

and one pants press, the pressers expect to finish at the same time. It does happen, but it is rare to see a pants presser bang out 225 pants and then happily clock out and go home while the other presser stays and presses the other (quick: “225 is 40 percent of what number, minus 225?”) 338 pieces.

In theory, this means that the pants presser works for 5 hours and 40 minutes, then clocks out and goes home, and the utility presser works for 10 hours. This only happens when the pants presser has some place to go after work. Most likely, they combine to work 9 hours each. Costing you over \$10,000 per year ((16hrs X \$12) + {2hrs X 1.5 X \$12} – {15.66hrs X \$12}) X {5 days X 52 weeks})! Ideally, that is 35.9 pph, but it’ll more likely be 31 pph.

There is a work-around

the pressers don’t like it too much and no one seems to think of doing this.

Putting this work-around aside for a minute, enter the double legger press. It’s a great machine and in Japan, they so routinely get 60 pants per hour that the productivity rate isn’t even used as a selling point by the equipment dealers.

But let’s say that you target 50 pants per hour with your new double legger. Why doesn’t it happen?

The answer is in the math! In the first example above, (one pants presser and one utility presser) the person pressing pants would be done with all of the day’s pants after 4.5 hours. Forget it.

If you have two pants pressers, each under-achieving at 25 pants per hour, will one double legger press, doing 50 pants per hour cut your labor to press pants in half?

Nope. A human that presses a mere 25 pants per hour on a traditional pants press lacks the co-ordination, drive and dexterity to press 50 pants on a double legger.

What’s the remedy? You guessed it. The solution is mathematical. If you want to do 50 pants per hour, you need to press (Quick: “50 is 40 percent of what number, minus 50?”) 75 utility pieces per hour. This means that:

- Your two utility pressers need to combine to press 75 pieces per hour. This doesn’t sound too lofty, but it isn’t likely. It is just a bit too much for two people with good quality. There may be bursts of time when it happens, but the global average won’t be there. If it did work this way, your PPH would be spectacular at nearly 42!
- Your single utility presser will fall drastically behind and work much later than the person that presses pants.
- Your two utility pressers

**HI-STEAM**

**A Complete Instant Pressing Department**  
Professional strength vacuum board and mini boiler combination.

Perfect for Tuxedo & Bridal Shops, Clothing Stores, Tailors & Alteration Rooms, Drop-off Stores, Valet Service, and more!

PND-98U

PND-2500A with SVP-24

PND-1000AD with SVP-24

MVP-35B

SVP-24

PND-3000A with MVP-35B

ES-2000AR Spotting Board

EUROPEAN FINISHING EQUIPMENT CORP.  
SECAUCUS, NJ  
WWW.HISTEAM.COM • SALES@HISTEAM.COM  
TOLL FREE: (888) 460-9292

WATCH VIDEO ONLINE  
WWW.HISTEAM.COM



# REDUCE YOUR CREDIT CARD PROCESSING FEES



Rates as low as .05%\*



Accept EMV/NFC  
(Apple Pay, ETC.),  
Checks and more



Process credit cards on  
your smartphone



Next Day Funding with  
weekend settlement

- ✓ FREE Credit Card Terminal Placement Wireless/Landline/High-Speed/Dial-Up
- ✓ Easy setup (with no setup fees and quick approvals)
- ✓ Seamless integration with your current POS
- ✓ \$295\*\* towards your early termination fee (if you have one) with your current processor
- ✓ Access to Payments Hub – our secure, online merchant portal
- ✓ Free paper\*\*



with  
4G / Wifi

- FREE NFC & EMV-Ready Terminal & Pin Pad or wireless terminal.
- Accept payments in-store, online, or on-the-go.



## OPTIONAL PROGRAMS:

Make the same profit margin with cash and non-cash payments!

- **Cash Discount**

NAB makes it easy to make the same profit from non-cash payments as you do with cash payments with our cash discount program.

- **Curbside Ordering**
- **Point of Sale Systems**  
Recommendations, Solutions & Integrations

GROW YOUR BUSINESS. PARTNER WITH NAB TODAY!

866.481.4604



WWW.NYNAB.COM

©2020 North American Bancard is a registered ISO of Wells Fargo Bank, N.A., Concord, CA, and The Bancorp Bank, Philadelphia, PA. American Express may require separate approval. \*Durbin regulated Check Card percentage rate. A per transaction fee will also apply. \*\*Some restrictions apply. This advertisement is sponsored by an ISO of North American Bancard. Apple Pay is a trademark of Apple Inc.





Don Desrosiers

# Letting the math work for you

Continued from page 14

need to combine to press the usual pieces per hour and the person pressing pants is better suited to keep pace with them and presses 40 pants per hour. No increase in production as anticipated.

• The pants presser also does easy pieces — items that only need up-steam like sweaters, ties, belts, etc. This evens out the piece count between the two pressers. It's a reasonable work-around, but the pants presser will not be able to do 50 pants per hour in this format.

So how do you get maximum productivity out of your double legger press? It's easy. It's math. (You won't like this answer.)

Have two double legger presses and five utility presses. The pants pressers combine to produce 100 pieces per hour in a plant that produces ("100 is 40 percent of what number?") 250 pieces per hour, while the five utility pressers combine to press the other 150 pieces by each pressing 30 pieces per hour.

I told you that you wouldn't like the answer. The problem, of course, is that you need to be doing 1,500+ pieces per day. Big problem for many of you. The good news is that you actually benefit from the economies of scale by getting

35.7PPH. Pretty darn good. Many times in this industry, economy of scale doesn't work in our favor. This time, it does.

The reality is that in any of these scenarios, good management can work it out. I'm not trying to spin a tale of woe, but I have learned that plant operators have a tendency to be hands-off with lot control and let the chips fall where they may.

And incidentally, "lot control" means anything that you want it to mean throughout this article. If you use barcodes, a "lot" is a batch from a store, a group of stores or a route or group of routes. If you use "color-per-day", a lot is that batch, etc. You get the idea. In any case, you want to keep orders together, at least conceptually, and 40 percent of the pieces in a typical batch will be pants.

What about total labor and productivity control?

Many plant operators tell me that they keep some garments hanging for the pressers to start with the next day.

It is almost always a joke because they don't leave nearly enough.

Let's assume that your press room produces 60 pieces per hour. How many pieces does your drycleaning department churn out?

If the numbers don't match, adjustments must be made in

order to keep labor costs in line.

Everybody's plant will be different, but let's say that you have a 40-lb. GreenEarth machine with a 70-minute cycle. The capacity of this machine is between 32 and 36 pounds of clothes. Let's call that 35 pieces. (You have a scale cart, of course.)

Assuming that there is a 10-minute lead time between machine cycles, you can clean 35 pieces in 80 minutes. And remember, you can press 60 pieces in 60 minutes. It's not hard to see the paradox. But some pieces are wetcleaned, so even plants with only one drycleaning machine can easily produce more than 35 pieces in 80 minutes.

How much more? Once again, using our industry-standard, one piece = one pound, your washer is packed with 50 pieces. It runs for 45 minutes and those garments are dried for 45 minutes and we will add a 10-minute lead time here as well.

So here you need 100 minutes to clean 50 pieces. All told, you can dryclean 35 pieces in 80 minutes and wet-clean 50 pieces in 100 minutes. This makes your total wheel capacity 56 pieces per hour. (35 pieces X 60 minutes divided by 80 minutes + 50 pieces X 60 minutes divided by 100 minutes).

You are mathematically behind the production curve, right out of the gate. And that makes four HUGE assumptions:

- You have 35 pieces to clean every 80 minutes.
- The drycleaning machine is functioning properly and is always available to you.
- You have 50 wetcleanable garments to wash every 100 minutes. (This is a tough one.)
- The washer is continually available to you. (Quite a challenge if this machine is also supposed to wash shirts.)

Assuming that you can keep the wash wheels turning at this rate, it will take the cleaning room 6.5 hours to produce what the pressers can press in six hours. There will need to be approximately 90 garments ready to press before the pressers begin lest they catch up to the cleaner.

If you don't do this, your pressers will underproduce because there won't be enough clothes to press.

OK, one more math problem. I am often asked about plant capacity. This is arbitrary.

Whatever you are able to produce in an eight-hour day is one-third of your capacity. You own your equipment 24/7 and you rent your space around the clock. Therefore, plant capacity is easy to calculate. Except for one thing — running your plant 24/7 probably isn't an option.

When I calculate plant capacity, I am referring to a 40-hour week. This assumes 10-hour days on Monday and Tuesday and dwindling piece counts as the week progresses. That point, by itself, sort of disproves the "triple what you're doing now" method. You can't work 30 hours on either Monday nor Tuesday.

To calculate your "breathable" maximum volume, start at the shirt unit. Let's say that you have a single buck shirt unit. It can produce 50 shirts per hour for 40 hours; 2,000 shirts.

In many markets in the US, that means that you will also take in approximately 2,000

drycleaning pieces. (Adjust according to your local demographic.)

Given the average revenue per piece of \$4.60, this plant can produce roughly \$1,000,000 per year in gross revenue.

Recalling the volume that a pants presser plus a utility presser can get out (say, 70 pieces per hour), they would work part-time in this scenario — mere 27 hours.

This is extremely costly because your plant would be running one-third of the time with only the shirt department running. There isn't enough profit in shirt laundering to support that. Alternately, as so many plant operators see 27 hours are stretched into 40. Even more costly!

Now, for our last exercise, let's take a look at what an optimally equipped plant would look like. Let's presume a double-buck rotary shirt unit with two collar/cuff machines. Let's target that at 90 pieces per hour. Two utility presses along with one pants station can produce 90 pieces per hour as well.

Now you can produce 7,200 pieces — \$1.7 million in gross revenue — a press room with only marginally more equipment. But more important, it's a press room that is fine-tuned to produce maximum productivity. Just make sure that your wheel capacity matches the press capacity.

Its all in the math!  
**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.**

## KLEERWITE CHEMICAL

Problem Solving Chemicals Since 1948

### Enhance Your Wet-Cleaning

### Wet-Cleaning Wonder Team

**SMARTCare**

**All-In-One  
Luxury-Feel  
Detergent**

- detergent, conditioner & sizing in one
- don't stop the wash cycle or fill balls with wash additives

**Nature-L**

**Grease,  
Oil & Soil  
Knock-Out**

- immediately disperses so stains quickly dissolve
- grease, oil & most other soil comes right out in the wash

**ENLIGHTEN**

**Visual  
Brightness  
WOW!  
Factor**

- pre-spot or pre-soak to remove stains even sodium perborate can't
- can be added to the wash for brightness & vibrancy

Call or email to add  
**SMARTCare, Nature-L & ENLIGHTEN**  
to your team today!  
**877-KLEERWITE (877-553-3794)**  
**info@kleerwite.com      www.kleerwite.com**

To learn more, visit [www.natclo.com/ads](http://www.natclo.com/ads)



**COMET CLEANERS** in San Antonio, TX, purchased a Union HL-890 cleaning machine with solvent heating through Gulf States Laundry Equipment. Pictured from left are Raymond Slush of Comet Cleaners, Rick Molina, Comet owner, Matt A. Lipman of Union and Guy Ellison, Comet owner.





# IS ALL YOU NEED

## Dry Cleaning Machines



Huge range of machines hard & soft mounted with still and/or filtration unit from 20 up to 90 Lb.

## Washer Extractors

## Tumbling Dryers



High Spin Soft Mounted, Extra & Regular  
Spin Hard Mounted from 20 up to 264 Lb.



Complete range from 20 up to 264 Lb.,  
With exclusive range of closed circuit - vent-less dryers

✓ **COMPLETE PARTS INVENTORY**

✓ **TECHNICAL SUPPORT**



✓ **US SCHOOLING AND TRAINING CENTER  
ON DRYCLEANING AND WET CLEANING  
MACHINES**

**Contact**

**Brent Padon: 561-644-5517**

email: bpadon@renzacci-usa.com - info@renzacci-usa.com

[www.renzacci-usa.com](http://www.renzacci-usa.com)



# THE SPOTTING BOARD



BY DAN EISEN

## Spotting and cleaning formulations

**C**hemical manufacturers have made tremendous strides in changing and improving their chemical formulations.

The chemical manufacturers do not necessarily use the same formulation for their products. I have found in my training that I used different spotting formulations from different companies.

**Neutral lubricant.** This is the most useful spotting formulation since it is the first step in removing wet-side stains. If you use the proper lubricant you will remove more wet-side stains in less time.

There are many products on the market and some are far superior than others.

Some manufacturers have produced a lubricant that works on the principle of microemissions. When I do training I have students use several different types and always find that they all lean towards one manufacturer. There are also some lubricants that are effective for removing dye on fabrics that have bled during wet-cleaning. Chemical sales reps will be happy to give you samples of their products for you to evaluate.

**Protein formulas.** Some

manufacturers make protein formulas with a low pH making it safe to silk and other delicate fabrics that may have color problems. There are also some manufacturers still making their protein formulas with ammonia that can cause problems to color safety. There are also some manufacturers making enzyme-based protein formulas that are effective and should be evaluated.

The advantage of using enzyme-based formulations is that they do not set tannin stains. Protein formulas, however, being slightly alkaline are effective in neutralizing rust

remover.

**Tannin formulation.** The tannin formulas manufactured have a low acid pH and are very effective in tannin stain removal. These formulations usually do not affect color or produce color change. They are as effective as tannin formulations with a stronger acid content or those containing acetic acid.

**Rust remover (hydrofluoric acid).** A useful acid for removing rust and metallic stains and for accelerating titanium stripper. This acid is not easily removed from fabrics even with thorough flushing. Using a low

alkaline based protein formula is the best way to neutralize and remove the rust remover from the fabric.

**Oxalic acid.** Many manufacturers make up a safe rust remover or fluoride-free rust remover using oxalic acid. It is safer for removing the metallic stains from garments with metal or glass trimming.

Oxalic acid can also be effective for removing difficult tannin stains.

The fabric should be tested for safety before use. It can be applied to the stain, heated with the steam gun and then flushed. Oxalic acid can also be used to neutralize sodium perborate bleach bath instead of acetic acid.

**Oily-type paint remover.** There are many products on the market; certainly the ones that are environmentally friendly are best to use. These products do not contain alcohol and can be flushed wet-side.

Some manufacturers make paint removers that will not flush easily when dry. Some products also do not easily rinse out in the drycleaning machine easily when dry.

**Oily-based ink removers.** These products vary from manufacturer to manufacturer. I like acid-based ink removers because they are also effective in removing many plastic-based stains such as nail polish and paint. I tested these products on some nail polish stains and found it to be as effective as using amyl acetate.

**Lanolin-type ink removers.** These chemicals are slightly alkaline and are effective on some inks that other formulations are not.

**Hydrogen peroxide.** This is a good bleach for removal of last traces of staining. EPA also lists it as an effective agent that destroys the COVID-19 virus.

Manufacturers have made formulations to be used for soaking and whitening silk and wool safely.

Products are also available using hydrogen peroxide and detergents as a booster for the wetcleaning system. Peracetic acid is an acid-based hydrogen peroxide bleach that is effective for cleaning wool and silk and is also an effective bleach for mildew removal. I have seen some cleaning systems using peracetic acid for cleaning laundered shirts and it seems to be very effective.

**Dan Eisen, former chief garment analyst for the National Cleaners Association, can be reached at (772) 340-0909 or (772) 579-5044, by e-mail at cleandan@comcast.net or through his website at www.garmentanalysis.com.**



### KEEP YOUR HARD EARNED MONEY



We've found over \$4 billion to offset the cost of environmental contamination, and that's why our clients keep their cash. Find out how you can protect your nest egg. **Call us today!**

866-888-7911

[enviroforensics.com](http://enviroforensics.com)

To learn more, visit [www.natclo.com/ads](http://www.natclo.com/ads)



# Stay Connected



DRYCLEANING & LAUNDRY  
INSTITUTE INTERNATIONAL

“ We rely on many DLI resources, especially during these very difficult times. **Weekly webinars** as well as our **informal chat room** have supplied strong information from industry leaders.

**Michael Shader**

Milt & Edie's Drycleaning & Tailoring Center  
Burbank, CA

“ DLI is doing a great job connecting cleaners and offering **webinars** and **weekly Zoom meetings** to help us navigate these crazy and **challenging times**. ”

**James McCormick**

McCormick Brothers  
Sellersville, PA

“ **During COVID-19** DLI membership means more. DLI is helping us navigate these challenging times and offers a form of **group therapy**. The **weekly Zoom meetings, webinars, and live demonstrations** allow us to **interact** with other cleaners to **exchange ideas**. I cannot say enough **good things** about the value of DLI membership.

“ **As a new member** the access to **online training and conference calls** with experienced cleaners has been invaluable. **The quick response, hands-on problem-solving and idea sharing** DLI has provided is **world-class**. ”

**Glen Gould**

Drycleaning Connection  
Peachtree City, GA

**Maria Kamperides**

Columbus Cleaners  
Boston, MA

“ DLI is sharing **solid, current, comprehensive ideas** on how to **market our position** during this crisis. ”

**Tim Wolf-Lewis**

Royal Majestic Cleaning & Laundry  
Mundelein, IL

DLI is here to help.

800-638-2627 • [www.DLIconline.org](http://www.DLIconline.org)



JANUARY 2019						
SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

FEBRUARY 2019						
SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28		

MARCH 2019						
SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

# DATELINE

APRIL 2019						
SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

MAY 2019						
SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
		1	2	3	4	
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

JUNE 2019						
SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

JULY 2019						
SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

AUGUST 2019						
SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

SEPTEMBER 2019						
SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

OCTOBER 2019						
SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

NOVEMBER 2019						
SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

DECEMBER 2019						
SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

## 2019

**July 11** Southwest Drycleaners Association board and membership meeting. Meeting will be online. Call (512) 873-8195.

**August 2** New York Department of Environmental Conservation classes, sponsored by the Na-

tional Cleaners Association on consecutive Sundays, New York, NY. Call (800) 888-1622.

**August 18** Wisconsin Fabricare Institute 17th Annual Fitzgerald Scholarship Classic, River Club of Mequon, Mequon, WI. Call (414) 488-1692.

**August 28** Minnesota Cleaners

Association annual meeting, dinner cruise and raffle, Lake Minnetonka. Call (763) 213-3231.

**September 23-25** Stain Removal course, DLI School of Drycleaning Technology, Laurel, MD. Call (800) 638-2627.

**September 28** Spotting seminar, sponsored by the Western States Laundry and Drycleaning Association. Laundry & Cleaners Supply, Phoenix, AZ. Call (877) 342-1114.

**October 9 2020** Dry Clean Expo, sponsored by the Wisconsin Fabricare Institute at the WFI

home office, Milwaukee, WI. Call (414) 488-1692.

**October 14-16** Texcare Asia and China Laundry Expo, Shanghai New International Expo Centre, China.

**October 19-23** Introduction to Drycleaning course, DLI School of Drycleaning Technology, Laurel, MD. Call (800) 638-2627.

**October 20-22** Textile Rental Services Association annual conference and exchange, Alexandria, VA. Call (703) 519-0029.

**October 26-November 6** Ad-

vanced Drycleaning course, DLI School of Drycleaning Technology, Laurel, MD. Call (800) 638-2627.

**October 30-31** Southwest Drycleaners Association board and membership meeting, The Woodlands, TX. Call (512) 873-8195.

**October 30-November 1** North Carolina Association of Launderers and Cleaners Annual Convention, Charlotte Marriott City Center, Charlotte, NC. Call (919) 313-4542.

**November 6-8** Drycleaning and Laundry Expo, sponsored by the Pennsylvania and Delaware Cleaners Association. Gaylord National Harbor, Maryland. Call (800) 822-7352.

**November 15** New York Department of Environmental Conservation classes, sponsored by the National Cleaners Association on consecutive Sundays, New York, NY. Call (800) 888-1622.

## 2021

**April 30-May 2** North Carolina Association of Launderers and Cleaners spring meeting, Blockade Runner Beach Resort, Wrightsville Beach, NC. Call (919) 313-4542.

**June 10-13** Clean Show, Georgia World Congress Center, Atlanta, GA. Call (770) 984-8023.

**October 19-22** Textile Rental Services Association annual conference and exchange, Carlsbad, CA. Call (703) 519-0029.

**November 27-December 1** Texcare International, Frankfurt, Germany. Visit [www.messe-frankfurt.com](http://www.messe-frankfurt.com).

## 2022

**April 20-22** Cleaners Showcase trade show sponsored by the Southwest Drycleaners Association, Irving Convention Center, near Dallas, TX, Call 512-873-8195.

**May 17-19** Excellence in Laundry Conference, sponsored by the Coin Laundry Association. Rancho Bernardo Inn, San Diego, CA. Call (800) 570-5629.

**July 29-30** Michigan Institute of Laundering and Drycleaning summer convention, Crystal Mountain, Thompsonville MI. Call (870) 390-6453.


**August 22-23** Fabricare trade show sponsored by the California Fabricare Association, Long Beach Convention Center, Long Beach, CA. Call (215) 830-8467.

**September 13-16** Textile Rental Services Association annual conference and exchange, Nashville, TN. Call (703) 519-0029.

## 2023

**May 18-23** Clean Show, Orange County Convention Center, Orlando, FL. Call (770) 984-8023.

**Coronavirus cancellations.** Many industry events have been canceled or postponed due to the coronavirus concerns. The information presented here is up-to-date as of mid-June but any events in the immediate future are subject to change. We are updating the industry calendar as we learn of these changes.



## Wet Cleaning is the New Dry Cleaning

“Wet cleaning is better & faster than dry cleaning. We wet clean anything from wool suits to wedding gowns.”

— Gary Heflin, Owner, Perfect Cleaners

Poseidon offers innovative programmability for complete control over every conditional aspect of the wet cleaning, drying and ironing process. That's why professional fabricare operations rely on Poseidon equipment to perfectly wet clean the most delicate items including tailored wool suits, cashmere sweaters, silk wedding dresses, and so much more!

CALL 800-482-3400 FOR A COST ANALYSIS OF DRY CLEANING VS. WET CLEANING IN YOUR FABRICARE BUSINESS!

**POSEIDON**  
TEXTILE CARE SYSTEMS®  
[poseidonwetcleaning.com](http://poseidonwetcleaning.com)  
800-482-3400 • 248-457-1140





# NEW NAME

## *...Same Top Brands*

Equipment Sales Corporation is **NOW**



**Gulf Coast**  
**Equipment Sales**

With over 30 years experience, we offer competitive pricing on the leading brands of equipment for the dry cleaning industry.



**UNIPRESS**



Forenta 471 Legger Press



Union HP & HL 800 Series



Forenta 421SR Utility



We are family owned and centrally located in Lakeland, Florida. Our factory trained technicians are able to deliver, install and service all makes. And, with over 20,000 parts in stock, our parts department is ready to serve.

***For New or Used Equipment, Service and Parts call***



**Gulf Coast**  
**Equipment Sales**

4304 Wallace Road, Lakeland, FL 33812 • 813-253-3191 • 863-333-0004  
gcdeinc@yahoo.com • gce equipmentsales.com



# AN OUTSIDE PERSPECTIVE



BY PETER BLAKE

## Re-opening: An industry evolution

Life is different. There is no question about it, life is different today than it was in early March when we started to see just how much things would be changing for everyone across the country and even the world.

Our routines have changed, our attitudes have changed, and as a result, so has our industry. In order to survive and thrive we need to evolve. We need to adapt our attitudes and businesses to new consumer attitudes and routines.

Over the course of the past two months I have highlighted ways to help navigate these uncertain times. I have given you ideas and information on ways to protect your business and help you prepare for tough times.

Last month we explored the marketing strategies vital to survival.

This month I want to focus on helping you decipher some of the ways we are evolving. I

am not going to lie and tell you that this pandemic has been a good thing, but it has provided a unique opportunity to take a long introspective look at your business, your customers, and the services you provide. This economic slowdown has given you a chance to re-shape the

*But I know, but I know a change is gotta come,*

Ottis Redding, "A Change is Gonna Come"

The country has gone through a huge reset over the past two months. For all intents and purposes, we stopped commerce, took a

you save them time. "Your time is better spent doing what they enjoy. Bring your laundry and drycleaning to us — so you can spend more time doing what you enjoy."

Advertise to your customers that pick-up and delivery saves time. Make sure to

ience is critical)

- Lockers/drop boxes
- Develop and promote new services (Think households, shoes, purses, curtains, drapes, etc.).

- Publish and highlight new safety plan and protocols
- Once you have made your

**Some cleaners will not survive, but if you are able to weather this storm and re-shape your business, it will come back. That evolution needs to be happening now.**

course of your business and be prepared as the country is slowly rolling back restrictions and opening up.

*"But there was a time that I thought*

*Lord this couldn't last for very long, oh my*

*Somehow I thought I was still able to try to carry on*

*It's been a long, long time coming*

break, and are now re-booting the economy.

That re-boot comes with significant change. All industries, including ours, are now answering to a different set of expectations and a new consumer paradigm. The shift has been dramatic and will be long lasting.

I sincerely hope you have taken this time to re-evaluate your business, assessed the challenges in your path, and are now prepared to move forward and capitalize on the opportunities that lie ahead.

### The customer dynamic

I am so sick of the phrase "the new normal", probably because there is no normal, there is just reality. People's priorities have evolved just like our businesses have.

People have been returning to the basics in life. They are spending more time with family and remembering how precious that time can be. People are looking for companies that prioritize their health, safety and welfare. They are also looking to support local community-based businesses. They are also putting a higher premium on their time.

What does this mean for your business? You need to evolve into a company people want to work with and support. You need to strengthen your message and demonstrate a commitment to the safety of your customer.

This may mean wearing masks, gloves, and installing protective shields. Whether you feel they are needed or not, you need to show your customers you are taking every precaution to make sure you are delivering a safe environment. This confidence will carry through to how you treat their garments. This will build consumer confidence.

I think this whole pandemic has re-vitalized the "family time" that seemed lost for generations. You need to embrace that and reinforce the idea that

highlight that it is a *free* service. Believe it or not, most potential customers do not know it is *free*.

We have also seen a re-birth of the "buy local" and support local business movement. You need to position your business in the communities you serve. Be active. Help where needed. Be empathetic to their concerns. Contribute to local efforts — the benefits will not be immediate, but in the long run it will pay off.

### Evolution of new ideas

Part of my job as an association executive is to get you thinking. I strive to provide members with information on the latest technology, services and business enhancements that could make a difference.

We recently had a webinar featuring three cleaners from different parts of the country discussing ways they significantly modified the way they were doing business. The purpose of the program was not to encourage people to do the same, but rather to give people ideas.

Look around. Take this time to do research on your business and what your peers from around the country are doing.

If you need help or if you want to investigate ideas, reach out to me. I am sure you are not the only one asking questions and I can help you find ways to explore different options.

Look at your business, who you are serving and the services you are providing. Look at ways you might be able to adapt and change to answer the concerns of today's new consumer attitudes. Don't assume your customers know your entire menu of services either. Look at services that are profitable and underutilized and highlight them.

I would specifically look at:

- Pick-up and delivery
- Wash-Dry-Fold
- Extended hours (fight the urge to limit hours; conven-

changes, celebrate your re-opening. Champion your business and all you do. Get the word out that you are open and ready to care for all their textile cleaning needs.

### Patience and optimism

While we would all love to see the market return to the level and forecasts that January and February held, that is not going to happen overnight. You need to be patient, and you need to keep your eyes on the long game. We are experiencing a long, slow steady climb back to pre-COVID sales levels.

SPOT Business Systems has been sharing graphs and analytics with their users and with DLI in our Facebook Group. The numbers are encouraging and they have shown a steady progression in all regions of the country.

I am not going to sugar coat it. It is a *slow* progression, but it is coming back. We are headed in the right direction, and I am confident that will continue.

You need to position yourself in the marketplace today to be there tomorrow, especially when you are needed. Invest in your plant during this downturn and evolve into the company your potential customers want to support.

There will be a shakeout in the industry. Some cleaners will not survive, but if you are able to weather this storm and be able to re-shape your business, it will come back. That evolution needs to be happening now. If you wait, you may not be able to recover.

Are you ready for your grand re-opening?

Peter Blake serves as executive director of the North East Fabricare Association, the Southeastern Fabricare Association, the MidAtlantic Association of Cleaners and the California Cleaners Association. He can be reached by email at [peteblake@aol.com](mailto:peteblake@aol.com) or by phone at (617) 791-0128.



**BRITE STAR UNIFORMS** in Alice, TX purchase a Union HL860 with solvent heating through Gulf States Laundry Machinery. Pictured from left are Robert McIntyre, the owner, Matt A. Lipman, Union Drycleaning Products, Letty Ramirez, the operator, and Richard and Courtney McIntyre, owners.

# CONSORZIO UNIMATIC

group industrial technology

## SHARE THE FUTURE TECHNOLOGY

Via R. Morandi, 13  
06012 Città di Castello (PG) ITALY  
Ph. +39 075 8521264

[www.consorziounimatic.it](http://www.consorziounimatic.it)  
[info@consorziounimatic.it](mailto:info@consorziounimatic.it)

POR-FESR (2014-2020) ASSE III AZIONE 3.3.1

To learn more, visit [www.natclo.com/ads](http://www.natclo.com/ads)



# NewsMAKERS



**Brian Grell**

**Brian Grell**, co-founder of **Eastern Funding, LLC**, has been elected chairman of the **Coin Laundry Association** for 2020. Grell previously served on the CLA board as treasurer.

He entered the laundry industry more than 30 years ago as a controller for the largest distributor of coin-operated laundry equipment and route operator in the United States at the time. After a decade in that role, he joined forces with **Michael Fanger** in starting Eastern Funding. This company has become a leading financial lender to vended laundries in the United States.

As a CLA board member, Grell has focused on helping owners improve their businesses.

“Brian has been integral to our success since we founded Eastern Funding in 1997,” said Fanger. “We are delighted that he is bringing his boundless energy, positive attitude, and love of the vended laundry industry to the CLA. The industry has and will continue to benefit from his contribution.”



**Sarah Gechter**

**Sarah Gechter** of Wyomissing, PA, was selected as the recipient of the 2020 **Textile Care Allied Trades Association** college scholarship. She is the daughter of Michael Gechter, who works for **Ellis Corporation** in Itasca, IL.

She ranked sixth out of 163 graduating seniors in high school, maintaining a weighted GPA of 5.15 despite a schedule of demanding courses and working many nights and weekends.

Gechter is involved with various extracurricular activities including volleyball, track, soccer, student council, Model United Nations, math team, drama club, Spanish club, National Honor Society and school choir.

She participates in volunteer services with Meals on Wheels, Berks Women in Crisis, Animal Rescue League, Salvation Army, homeless shelters, nursing homes, and church services.




**Kaelah McIntosh** of **Apple Cleaners** in East St Louis recently attended **Route Pro University** and received her **Certificate of Route Management** from **James Peuster** (left) and **Kayla Stough** (right), general manager.


















Front-liners have the challenge of managing their clothing against contaminating others. If they wear their work clothing home, they are exposing their vehicles or public transit and run the risk of exposing their families at home.

New York Life Representatives **Alex Bucacich** and **Shawn Swift** joined together and donated a case of **It'sMyBag** reusable garment bags for nurses at Northwell Hospital in Manhasset, NY. Long Island postal workers donated It'sMyBag for a front-liners at NUMC Hospital in East Meadow NY. Nurse Maggie McGovern working at Nassau Community College and her daughter, also a nurse working at LIJ/Northwell in Lake Success New York, were gifted It'sMyBag. Nurse McGovern then played it forward by buying It'sMyBag for other nurses.

**Tonia Torrellas**, creator of **It'sMyBag.com** explains. “It keeps your soiled clothing and your clean clothing separate and organized. That protects them from spreading the Coronavirus to others. They can be disinfected for reuse.”



## Customer Service is everyone's job!



# Realstar, USA

1-888-822-7827  
[www.realstarusa.com](http://www.realstarusa.com)



# KEEP IT LEGAL



BY FRANK KOLLMAN

## When, what and how to document

I had a surreal conversation with an investigator from the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission yesterday about “documentation.”

The particular former employee in question had been fired after six months for performance reasons. The final straw was when the employee told her supervisor that it was his fault she was making mistakes because she was not being properly trained.

Faced with an employee who needed improvement but was unwilling to commit to the improvement, the company fired her. The EEOC investigator asked for “documentation” of her performance problems in the form of written discipline, saying that the absence of documentation would prove that she was not counseled about her performance deficiencies.

I tried to explain the law, which does not require any written documentation to justify a personnel action, but I got nowhere. While I conceded that the absence of written documentation sometimes hurts an employer’s case, it is not required, and in some instances, is not at all appropriate.

With respect to job perform-

ance, I pointed out that if an employer really wishes an employee to improve his performance, it should not be giving written warning after written warning, which can be demor-

knowing what documentation is going into their files.

In fact, in many states, employers are required to show employees their personnel files.

The warnings (or suspension or termination) should describe what the employee did to warrant the action. It is not enough to say that the employee acted “inappropriately”

cient proof that the company took the action it said it did.

Bad documentation is the other side of the coin. Stick to the facts. The time to editorialize is not in a document that a

**Any language in the documentation that is an attempt to make you, the so-called “bad guy,” feel better about the process should be avoided.**

alizing. Written documentation can sometimes have just the opposite effect by making performance under pressure worse.

The conversation got me thinking that a column on documentation might be in order. When should an action be documented and when should discretion demand no written document be created?

Before I give you my thoughts, I want to let you know that I firmly believe that nothing should go into an employee’s personnel file that she has not seen.

Unlike the movie *Animal House*, I do not believe that employees should be placed on “double secret probation” and therefore prevented from

Even in Maryland, which does not have a requirement, I advise companies to allow employees to view their files in a non-disruptive manner upon request. Double secret probation does not really work.

If an employee is being disciplined beyond a first oral warning and the conduct could result in suspension or discharge, the discipline should be documented. I do not, however, believe in written oral warnings, which I have seen. If you talk to an employee about a problem and it is the second or third time, a written warning would be in order. If the misconduct is serious, a written warning may be appropriate after the first instance.

or was “insubordinate,” for example. It would be better to say “Martha kicked over a wastepaper basket because I asked her to help another employee” or “I asked John to help an employee, and he told me to kiss his @\$%.” Besides, it’s more colorful to describe the misconduct in detail.

If performance is the issue, you need to weigh whether a formal performance review should be conducted. Writing up counseling every time you discuss a shortcoming with the employee could be counterproductive; it would be better to discuss those counseling sessions during the performance review, mentioning them in the written evaluation.

When documentation is believed to be warranted, again, describe the poor performance in objective language. “Unsatisfactory” is not as compelling as “Sally is expected to iron 22 shirts an hour, and she averages 4.”

Once you “document” an encounter with an employee, give the employee a copy of the document. There is no need to have the employee sign for it if you note on the one in the personnel file that you have given him a copy.

Unless you are prepared to discipline an employee for refusal to sign, it is better not to get too formal. Despite what the EEOC investigator said, testimony under oath is suffi-

lawyer will use on cross examination to question your motives.

Any language in the documentation that is an attempt to make you, the so-called “bad guy,” feel better about the process should be avoided. Too many times I have seen written discipline contain an apology for having to issue it. Never, ever do that.

In sum, not every interaction with your employees should be viewed as an incident you will someday have to discuss in court. I would not want to work for someone who thinks everything must be documented.

Moreover, over documentation sometimes looks suspicious, especially if all the documentation is directed at minorities, women, or older workers.

Use good judgment, and do what is best for your business. It is fine to rely on your lawyer to prove later, if necessary, that you took the action you did and the absence of documentation is appropriate.

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](http://www.kollmanlaw.com). It has articles, sample policies, news and other information on employee/employer relations.

### A LIMITED TIME OFFER TO ZERO WASTE OWNERS

**EZTIMERS IS OFFERING ALL ZERO WASTE OWNERS A WHOPPING \$300 TRADE IN TOWARDS THE PURCHASE OF OUR TOP OF THE LINE SAHARA SEPARATOR WATER DISPOSAL SYSTEM**

**CALL BRUCE AT 702-376-6693**



**SAHARA**

**ALL SOLVENTS**

**ULTRA RELIABLE- 3 YEAR BUMPER TO BUMPER WARRANTY**  
**NO EXPENSIVE FILTERS TO REPLACE ★ NO EXPENSIVE SENSORS TO REPLACE ★ NO PUMPS TO REPLACE**  
**EASY INSTALL-COMPATIBLE WITH ZERO WASTE STEAM EVAPORATORS OR MISTING NOZZLES**



**www.eztimers.com**

**702-376-6693**



TUCSON CLEANERS in Tucson, AZ, purchased a Columbia drycleaning system using Sensene through New Wave Equipment of Phoenix. Pictured are Dimitri Asparza of New Wave Equipment, Chris Hogard of Columbia ILSA, Dave Thomas, owner of Tucson Cleaners, and Matt Bizzack of New Wave Equipment.





**Save Time, Labor  
and Money  
with EzProducts**



**Heat Seal Presses**  
*You Deserve the Best! The Ultimate Heat Seal Machine*  
Choose from 3 models, 7 interchangeable  
lower platens, single or dual heat  
115V or 230V 2 Year Warranty  
Proudly Made in the USA • Built to OSHA Standards

**Scanner/barcode**  
Pre-printed sequentially numbered  
heat seal barcode  
labels in one  
day, Four sizes  
with or without  
a side stripe



**Text Label Printer**  
Permanent Clothing  
Label Cartridges  
Eliminate paper tags



**EzLabelOff**  
Removes heat  
sealed labels from  
most fabrics



**Molly the  
HangerDolly**  
Easily store  
and transport  
500 hangers

**Stop Shaking Out Shirts**  
**Genuine MBH Rope-Ties  
& Zip-Ties**  
Five Colors available for special handling,  
finishing or routes

**Toll Free  
877.906.1818  
www.ezpi.us**

To learn more, visit [www.natclo.com/ads](http://www.natclo.com/ads)

# KLEERWITE CHEMICAL

*Problem Solving Chemicals Since 1948*

## Supercharge Your Spotting

### Super Spotting Team

**TAN**away

- Even Wine Stains Tannin Remover**
- removes wine stains other tannin removers won't
  - removes even the toughest yellow stains in minutes

**Super**POG

- P-O-G Remover with Amyl Acetate**
- unique formulation prevents pigment dyes from redepositing
  - successfully cleans lipstick loads

**PRO**form

- One-Step Protein Remover**
- removes residual oil in protein stains in one fast & easy step
  - no ammonia = less chance of garment damage

Call or email to add  
TANaway, SuperPOG & PROform  
to your team today!  
877-KLEERWITE (877-553-3794)  
[info@kleerwite.com](mailto:info@kleerwite.com) [www.kleerwite.com](http://www.kleerwite.com)

To learn more, visit [www.natclo.com/ads](http://www.natclo.com/ads)

# WANT TO IMPROVE YOUR PLANT'S PRODUCTIVITY?



**CONTACT DON DESROSIERS**  
Over 40 years of experience in dry  
clean operations,  
workflow engineering and  
management consulting means  
that you will be in good hands!  
Solutions for all types of plant  
operations; bar codes, automated  
assembly and conventional tag  
systems.

617.207.5218  
[TAILWINDSYSTEMS.COM](http://TAILWINDSYSTEMS.COM)



To learn more, visit [www.natclo.com/ads](http://www.natclo.com/ads)

## THE 21st CENTURY CONSUMER HAS CHANGED HAVE YOU?



## YOUR BEST ROUTE TO SUCCESS



To learn more, visit [www.natclo.com/ads](http://www.natclo.com/ads)



Rates: \$1.70 per Word. \$35 minimum  
Deadline 10th of the Month  
To place an ad, call (215) 830 8467  
or download the form at  
[www.natclo.com/adform](http://www.natclo.com/adform)

# Market Place

## Business Opportunities

### Sell Your Drycleaner New Jersey Pennsylvania Delaware

#### Patriot Business Advisors

Phone: 267-391-7642 • Fax: 800-903-0613

[broker@patriotbusinessadvisors.com](mailto:broker@patriotbusinessadvisors.com)  
[patriotbusinessadvisors.com](http://patriotbusinessadvisors.com)

## Position Available

**Independent reps needed** for covers and pads for laundry and drycleaning plants. High commissions paid weekly and no up front investment on rep's part. Large territories are available. Mechanics, etc., welcome. Zeller-mayer Corp, 800/431-2244 or [zeller-mayercorp@aol.com](mailto:zeller-mayercorp@aol.com). **tfc**

## Plant Design

**Expanding? Consolidating? Reno-vating? Relocating?** We provide cost-saving plant layouts. Visit [www.drycleandesign.com](http://www.drycleandesign.com). Email: [bill-stork@drycleandesign.com](mailto:bill-stork@drycleandesign.com). Phone 618/531-1214.

## Reweaving

**Without-A-Trace: Chosen the best** in the U.S. by the Robb Report. Over 50 years experience. Experts in silk, knits, French weaving and piece weaving. For more information, please view our web site: [www.withoutatrace.com](http://www.withoutatrace.com). 3344 West Bryn Mawr, Chicago, IL, 60659. 1-800-475-4922

## Wholesale Cleaning

**Wholesale Drycleaning and Shirt** laundry available. High quality work. Fast turn around service. We are located in West Chester, NY. Call 914-906-6299. Ask for Richard.

Miss an issue?  
Looking for an article?  
Want to connect to the  
industry?  
Point your web browser to

FabricareManager

System Solutions for Dry Cleaners

888.299.9493

Back Issues

Classified Ads

Advertisers

Resources

Dateline

Associations

Links

About Us

June 2020

National Clothesline

**EPA review pending.** EPA released its draft risk evaluation for perc, continuing a review process that began several years ago.

**Crisis marketing.** Stay in touch with your customers and be ready for the reopening of business, advises association executive Peter Blake.

**An essential service.** Drycleaners' services have been deemed essential during the shutdown. Pickup and delivery is essential to provide that service.

**Steps for reopening.** Frank Kollman offers practical and legal considerations for cleaners as they plan for a full reopening of business.

**Cleaning by hand.** Even if the label says "Do Not Dryclean or Wash," you can still clean it, says Dan Eisen.

**SDA plans to meet.** The Southwest Drycleaners Association is planning to host a membership meeting and seminar in July — emphasis on the word planning. Nothing is set in stone in the Covid Age.

**Online gatherings.** With coronavirus restrictions on travel and group gatherings, industry groups are opting to hold meetings online.

Complete table of contents of this issue [here](#).

View the flipbook version [here](#).

facebook

### Seeking recovery – and forgiveness

After a brutal month of April that saw business off as much 80 percent from a year ago, drycleaners were witnessing a recovery of sorts in May in which business "improved" to a level of 65 to 70 percent off year ago figures as people began slowly emerging from a virtual lockdown in the face of the spread of the COVID-19 virus.

Government ordered shutdowns of business that were beginning to loosen in May didn't effect most cleaners directly since they were generally deemed essential and allowed to remain open. But being open did not equate to having business. [More...](#)

### We'll meet again

Sonnes like this seem to be from a distant past, but it was just one year ago this month that the industry gathered for the Clean Show in New Orleans. The COVID-19 pandemic has caused the cancellation of many industry gatherings, including regional trade shows planned by the Southwest Drycleaners Association in Ft. Worth in April and the South Eastern Fabricare Association show planned for this month in Kissimmee, FL. It remains to be seen if other regional trade shows will be able to go on as planned. The Clean Show is still on track for next June in Atlanta. As the old song goes, "We'll meet again some sunny day."

**[www.natclo.com](http://www.natclo.com)**

- Complete text of the current issue.
- Back issues to 2014 with search capabilities
- Links to hundreds of industry web sites
- On-line classifieds

Find it fast when you need it at [natclo.com](http://natclo.com).

## Equipment and Supplies

### HUGE LIQUIDATION OF DRY CLEANING PLANT DUE TO MERGER

Equipment is all operational and can be viewed in Montreal, Quebec. Listed below is just a sampling of what we have to sell.

- Sysmectic (formerly HMC) ADAC Automatic Dry-cleaning Assembly Conveyor System (service contract available)
- Polypack Type 22A Auto Garment Bagger (service available from U.S. based technician)
- Hoffman New Yorker Utility Presses 42", 45"
- Hoffman New Yorker Drapery/Flatwork Presses 24"x60", 24"x96"
- Unipress NT2 Double Buck Shirt Press with two PCZ Cuff & Collar Presses
- Unipress all-in-one VASY3P Shirt Unit
- Unipress Tensioning Utility Finisher (TUF)
- Sankosha Pant Topper & Double Legger
- Continental & Cissell Steam dryers – 75-100lbs
- Continental 55lb, Unimac 60lb, Milnor 135lb Washers
- Air Compressors 5HP, 40HP
- Vacuum with reservoir 5HP
- Rema Vacuum Double Tank RPD50
- Cissell Puff Irons, Spotting Tables & Hand Finishing Tables
- Sleeveers — Cissell Horizontal, Kriete & Cindy Lou Vertical
- Iowa Techniques Helping Hand Sheet Holder
- Automatic Twist Tie Machine
- Harris Pillow-Vac
- Sonozaire Ozone Machines
- Conveyor Systems-Retail, Screw & Trolley Type

**Please email or call Marty Peletz for a complete list of equipment, photos and pricing at [mpeletz@bellinghamnett.com](mailto:mpeletz@bellinghamnett.com) or 514-733-4444 ext.240.**

**Multi-plant operation consolidated.** Lots of equipment for sale. 3 perc machines. 3 boilers. 3 shirt units. 3 rotary air compressors. And more. Call 828/712-9634 or 828-712-9634 or email [marvin@swannanoacleaners.com](mailto:marvin@swannanoacleaners.com).

## Catalogs



Newhouse Specialty Company, Inc.

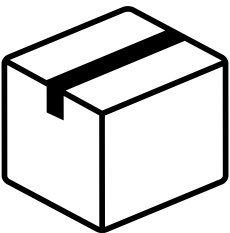
**High quality products for Drycleaners and Garment Manufacturers.**  
Serving our customers since 1946.



Call 877-435-3859 for a Newhouse Catalog or go to [www.newhouseco.com](http://www.newhouseco.com) to download and print a page.



**GREAT PRICES.  
FAST DELIVERY.**



**OVER 20,000  
PRODUCTS  
IN-STOCK.**

**1-800-568-7768  
CLEANERSUPPLY.COM**

Your one-stop parts shop

DRYCLEANING, LAUNDRY AND FINISHING EQUIPMENT PARTS

**NEXT DAY DELIVERY**

**ALL BRANDS  
LOW PRICES**

Visit our website:  
[www.prosparts.com/nat](http://www.prosparts.com/nat)

**1-866-821-9259**

### QUALITY REBUILT EQUIPMENT

BUILT TO THE HIGHEST  
STANDARD AT  
AFFORDABLE PRICES

Phone: 757/562-7033.  
**Mosena Enterprises Inc.**  
PO Box 175  
26460 Smith's Ferry Rd.  
Franklin, VA 23851  
[richardm@mosena.com](mailto:richardm@mosena.com)  
[www.mosena.com](http://www.mosena.com)

**"We know your Bowe"**  
We stock parts for Bowe, Eazy Clean, Permac EC Dry cleaning machines and Veit Finishing Equipment

**We can be reached at:**  
Call 1-800-287-0870  
Fax – 704-234-2821  
Email – [bill@permac.com](mailto:bill@permac.com)

**Same day shipping in most cases**

To place your  
classified ad  
in the next issue,  
visit our website and  
download the pdf form at  
[www.natclo.com/adform](http://www.natclo.com/adform)  
For assistance or more  
information, email us at  
[info@natclo.com](mailto:info@natclo.com)  
or call (215) 830-8467.

**Dry Cleaner's Special!**  
[www.sonozaire.com](http://www.sonozaire.com)  
Call 800-323-2115  
for nearest distributor

**Diamond Cleaners  
Computer from  
\$39/mos  
800-298-5968**

## Index of Advertisers

July 2020

Cleaner Business System..2	NIE Insurance .....5
Cleaners Supply.....26	North American Bancard..15
Consorzio Unimatic.....22	Parker Boiler .....7
Diamond Computer.....26	Patriot Business Advisors 26
DLI .....19	Permac Parts Depot .....26
EnviroForensics .....18	Poseidon Textile Care System.....20
European Finishing ....14, 28	PROS Parts .....26
EZ Timers.....24	Realstar.....23
EZProducts .....25	Renzacci USA.....17
Fabricare Manager.....11	Route Pro.....25
Forenta.....13	Sankosha, USA.....9
Gulf Coast Equipment.....21	Sonozaire .....26
Iowa Techniques .....8	Steiner Atlantic .....3
Kleerwite Chemical ....16, 25	Tailwind .....25
Lapels Dry Cleaning .....12	Union .....27
Mosena Enterprises.....26	Unisec .....10
Newhouse Specialties.....26	

**Visit these advertisers' web sites!  
Links to all are listed  
at [www.natclo.com/ads](http://www.natclo.com/ads)**





Treating every customer like family!



**HP800 Models**  
\*space saving  
\*25 to 60 pounds  
\*uni-jet spray wash



**HL800 Models**  
\*solvent heating  
\*self cleaning separator  
\*multisolvent



**HXL8000-C Models**  
\*cartridge only  
\*no water  
\*economic



**No Solvent Models**  
\*steam cleaning  
\*dazzling results  
\*no bolt down



**Tandem Models**  
\*high production  
\*utility saving  
\*less floor space



**Nova Models**  
\*steam optional  
\*powder optional  
\*no water



**1-800-433-9401**  
**www.uniondc.com**

*America's Best Selling Brand of Dry Cleaning Machines*





# **SAM-451** **and TURBO-JR.** *Beautifully Finished Garments*

## **SAM-451**



## **SAM-451** **MULTI-GARMENT** **FINISHER**

- For shirts, blouses, suit jackets, polo shirts, lab coats, chef coats
- No broken buttons, little or no touch-ups
- No shine or discoloration on dark colored shirts
- All size shirts small to 3XL
- All Fabric types (cotton, linen, silk, spandex, etc.)
- Soft to heavy starch
- Simple to operate; No experience needed



## **TURBO-JR**

### **NEW, HIGH-SPEED, HIGH PRODUCTION, ECONOMICAL TENSIONING SHIRT FINISHER**

- 60+ shirts per hour
- Affordable
- No hot metal buck, no broken buttons, no color loss
- Small shirts to size 3XL
- Fine quality finish
- Easy to operate
- Touch screen control
- Also Available TURBO-Jr.(E),  
*Electric Shirt Finisher, No Boiler*



**EZ-KWIK  
CUFF CLAMPS**

**WATCH  
VIDEO  
ONLINE**

[WWW.HISTEAM.COM](http://WWW.HISTEAM.COM)

## **EUROPEAN FINISHING EQUIPMENT CORP.**

1 COUNTY ROAD, UNIT A-10, SECAUCUS, NJ 07094

PHONE: (201) 210-2247 • FAX: (201) 210-2549 • [SALES@HISTEAM.COM](mailto:SALES@HISTEAM.COM)

[WWW.HISTEAM.COM](http://WWW.HISTEAM.COM)

TOLL FREE: (888) 460-9292