

# FAQs for Connecticut Dry Cleaners - Part 2



The Connecticut Department of Energy & Environmental Protection (DEEP) has prepared answers to questions that are frequently asked by dry cleaners. While these do not constitute legal advice, they are meant to be a starting point to help you prevent pollution, use best management practices and understand environmental regulations that affect your dry cleaning operations.

## **Buying and Selling a Dry Cleaning Business:**

### ***1. What do I need to know if I'm planning to buy a dry cleaning business?***

If you weren't aware of it, DEEP's Property Transfer program applies to CT dry cleaners. It requires the seller to disclose the environmental conditions of the site. Either the buyer or the seller has to certify that they will investigate and clean up the site within required timeframes. The dry cleaning process generally uses chemical solvents, such as perchloroethylene (perc), as well as chemical spot cleaners, so there is a high possibility that the property has hazardous substances or wastes that would require clean up. The seller can negotiate with the buyer prior to the sale regarding which party will be responsible for addressing any environmental issues that need to be resolved. It is recommended that before buying a dry cleaning business you consult with an attorney who has experience in environmental issues. Detailed information on the Property Transfer program is available on CT DEEP's website at: [http://www.ct.gov/deep/cwp/view.asp?a=2715&q=325006&depNav\\_GID=1626](http://www.ct.gov/deep/cwp/view.asp?a=2715&q=325006&depNav_GID=1626).

### ***2. What requirements should I be aware of if I am selling a dry cleaning business?***

DEEP's Property Transfer Program requires all sellers of dry cleaning operations to disclose the environmental conditions to the buyer. The entire parcel must be evaluated even if only the business is being sold. The parties can negotiate who will be responsible for any required cleanup, but if no agreement is reached the seller is responsible. An Environmental Condition Assessment Form must be submitted to the CT DEEP along with the appropriate Property Transfer form. [Property Transfer Program](http://www.ct.gov/deep/cwp/view.asp?a=2715&q=325006&depNav_GID=1626) information can be found on the CT DEEP's website at [http://www.ct.gov/deep/cwp/view.asp?a=2715&q=325006&depNav\\_GID=1626](http://www.ct.gov/deep/cwp/view.asp?a=2715&q=325006&depNav_GID=1626).

### ***3. Are there any restrictions on the type of dry cleaning machine I can buy or use?***

Yes, especially if your perc dry cleaning business is located in a residential building. It also depends on whether you are an "existing" dry cleaner or a "new" dry cleaner.

- Existing dry cleaners using perc machines and located in residential buildings will be required to switch to either wet cleaning or another solvent or move the perc dry cleaning equipment to a non-residential location by December 21, 2020.
- New dry cleaning machines located in residential buildings and installed after July 27, 2006, may not use perc.
- All dry cleaning facilities constructed before July 27, 2006 are considered existing sources; all dry cleaning facilities constructed on or after July 27, 2006 are considered new sources.  
<https://www.epa.gov/ttn/atw/area/drycleanbs.doc>
- Also, as of December 1993 the legal use of any transfer (dry to dry) machine is prohibited at any location.

### ***4. Where can dry cleaners get information on remediation in CT and other states as well as federal government information?***

- [DEEP's Remediation Division](#) oversees the investigation and cleanup (also known as remediation) of contaminated properties.
- The CT Department of Economic and Community Development oversees the **Dry Cleaning Establishment Remediation Fund** and hosts informational meetings twice per year to provide updates

to the industry on the administration of the Fund as well as to gather input and feedback from the industry. Information is available on their website at

<http://www.ctbrownfields.gov/ctbrownfields/cwp/view.asp?a=2620&q=319328>.

- Members of the State Coalition for Remediation of Dry Cleaners have compiled information about their states' programs available on-line at <https://drycleancoalition.org/>
- US EPA has regulatory information for the Dry Cleaning Sector available at <https://www.epa.gov/regulatory-information-sector/dry-cleaning-sector-naics-8123>

## ***5. Are there any issues related to dry cleaning chemicals the US EPA is currently reviewing?***

Yes, in December 2016, the U.S. EPA announced it will evaluate [perc, also known as tetrachloroethylene](#), as one of the first chemicals to be evaluated under the new Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA) for potential risks to human health and the environment. According to the Act the EPA must conclude its evaluation within 3 years which will determine whether perc presents an unreasonable risk to humans and the environment. If perc does present an unreasonable risk, EPA must abate that risk within two years. Perc is present in drinking water, indoor environments, and in air, groundwater and soil. It is a probable human carcinogen.

In 2016 EPA also published in the Federal Register a proposed regulation to prohibit commercial use of trichloroethylene (TCE), for aerosol degreasing and for spot cleaning in dry cleaning facilities; to require manufacturers, processors, and distributors, except for retailers of TCE for any use, to provide downstream notification of these prohibitions throughout the supply chain; and to require limited recordkeeping.

## ***6. What is the best way to store my supply of solvent and spot chemicals?***

- It's best to have as little solvent stored as possible, since what you use may be a hazardous chemical.
- Be sure to keep lids tightly sealed on all chemicals.
- Try to switch to non-hazardous spot cleaners and to store these items as high as possible from the floor.
- Try to switch to wet cleaning because it uses non-toxic detergents. Information and resources for wet cleaning can be found on the CT DEEP website at <http://www.ct.gov/deep/cwp/view.asp?a=2708&q=323976>

## ***7. Which dry cleaning solvents or methods are "green" or safe for the environment and human health?***

Several alternatives to perc were assessed by the Massachusetts Toxic Use Reduction Institute at UMass- Lowell in an effort to find economically viable and environmentally preferred methods for professional garment cleaning.

The full report is available on-line at

[http://www.ct.gov/deep/lib/deep/p2/business\\_industry/drycleaner/2012\\_M&P\\_Report\\_27\\_Assessment\\_of\\_Safer\\_Alternatives\\_to\\_Perchloroethylene.pdf](http://www.ct.gov/deep/lib/deep/p2/business_industry/drycleaner/2012_M&P_Report_27_Assessment_of_Safer_Alternatives_to_Perchloroethylene.pdf), and a summary fact sheet at

[http://www.turi.org/TURI\\_Publications/TURI\\_Chemical\\_Fact\\_Sheets/Fact\\_Sheet\\_-\\_Alternatives\\_to\\_Perchloroethylene\\_Used\\_in\\_Professional\\_Garment\\_Care](http://www.turi.org/TURI_Publications/TURI_Chemical_Fact_Sheets/Fact_Sheet_-_Alternatives_to_Perchloroethylene_Used_in_Professional_Garment_Care).

Seven alternatives were assessed including wet cleaning, Carbon Dioxide (Cool Clean Technologies and Solvair), High Flashpoint Hydrocarbons (DF2000, EcoSolv), Acetal (SolvonK4), Propylene Glycol Ethers (Solvair, Gen-X), Siloxane (Green Earth, D5 solvent), and n-Propyl Bromide (Drysol, Fabrisolv XL). Overall the assessed alternative solvents are less toxic than perc with the exception of n-Propyl Bromide. However, a major concern is that many of the alternatives are flammable, with the exception of wet cleaning and carbon dioxide. In addition, there is not enough toxicological data and other information on these alternatives at this time.

## **8. Why should I consider using wet cleaning instead of a chemical solvent?**

Wet cleaning uses water and non-hazardous detergents rather than a chemical solvent therefore you can avoid any health hazards and regulatory requirements associated with solvents. Used perc and hydrocarbon solvents are hazardous wastes and must be managed as such; other solvent wastes, such as those from K-4 (Solvon), and Green Earth are also subject to [regulatory requirements for waste handling](#).

In CT, dry cleaners who use only wet cleaning do not need to pay into the CT [Dry Cleaning Establishment Remediation Fund](#). CT Dept. of Revenue Services has a new Special Notice, **SN 2018(6)**, Obligation of Dry Cleaners for the Dry Cleaning Establishment Surcharge and Business Use Tax; wet cleaning establishments are not subject to the dry cleaning surcharge and would **not** complete REG-1, Addendum B.

For details, visit: <https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/DRS/Publications/pubssn/2018/SN20186pdf.pdf?la=en>

A number of dry cleaners in Massachusetts have switched to using wet cleaning only. The Toxic Use Reduction Institute at UMass-Lowell (TURI) has [case studies](#) of these dry cleaners that you can read.

New York State is also promoting wet cleaning and has produced a short video, entitled Wet is the New Dry. It can be viewed on YouTube here <https://youtu.be/ehsMSNZ1v-s>.

## **9. How can I prepare my business to be more resilient against extreme weather events (storms and floods) as well as other unpredictable hazards like broken pipes?**

There are many steps you can take to reduce your risks. First, know if your property is located in a vulnerable area such as a flood zone. Try to reduce or eliminate chemicals and hazardous waste that you have on-site by switching to non-toxic alternatives. Keep all chemicals and waste tightly covered at all times, and secure tanks and drums and locate chemicals as high up off the floor as feasible. CT DEEP has materials on posted on our website to help dry cleaners be resilient and “weather the storm” at:

[http://www.ct.gov/deep/cwp/view.asp?a=2708&q=323976&deepNav\\_GID=1763](http://www.ct.gov/deep/cwp/view.asp?a=2708&q=323976&deepNav_GID=1763)

A best management practice for any size dry cleaner using solvents is to have an emergency coordinator, emergency response equipment (absorbents, gloves or other protective equipment) and keep an emergency contact phone tree for your facility which includes phone numbers for the Emergency Coordinator, local police, fire and emergency medical service (EMS), and spill contactor(s). At a minimum, you should post this list in areas where you store hazardous waste and near all telephones within the facility.

**Prepared by CT DEEP Office of Pollution Prevention, January 2018, updated 7/2018. This fact sheet was funded by an US EPA PPIS grant.**

[http://www.ct.gov/deep/cwp/view.asp?a=2708&q=323976&deepNav\\_GID=1763](http://www.ct.gov/deep/cwp/view.asp?a=2708&q=323976&deepNav_GID=1763)