

cleaning specialist

Winter/Spring 2006
Issue 16

news and information from Prochem Europe for the carpet, fabric and floor care professional

Free inside

Your easy-reference
pocket-sized stain
removal guide!



First impressions count

How to use Urine Neutraliser

Linoleum:

We look at what it is
and how you clean it . . .



Welcome

THE COLD of winter brings on all manner of challenges for the professional cleaner – and they're not restricted to cleaning.

In this latest issue of *Cleaning Specialist*, we look at the issue of equipment maintenance, where the message is to count preventative maintenance not as 'down time' but 'down time prevention'.

Coincidentally, we have a special Mind Your Qs & As session on equipment, together with our popular regular item answering your questions on chemical product usage.

Here's a question for you: When is vinyl floor not vinyl floor? More often than not when it's linoleum.

Does it really matter? Use the wrong maintenance solution on it, and the answer is going to be 'yes'.

Our latest Floor Focus looks at one of the most eco-friendly flooring solutions around – and how to clean it.

In the public's view, offensive odour equates with lack of cleaning. The solution from Prochem Europe is one of its most successful chemicals.

B153 Urine Neutraliser is the focus product in the 'How To Use' slot in this issue. We look at a product that has been at the forefront of Prochem's development within the headline-grabbing healthcare sector.

We have a round-up of news on Prochem and its new products and initiatives. And then there's the latest on you, our readers.

Whether you are cleaning, distributing or sourcing cleaning products, or managing environments requiring the best cleaning solutions, this magazine is as much about you as about us.

Please keep your news and views coming in. And have a very successful 2006 in the professional cleaning business!

Peter Muir, Editor

■ **Enclosed with this issue please find your complimentary copy of a brand-new 12-page pocket guide to professional stain removal. If your guide is missing, please call 020 8974 1515.**

Have you got news for us?

Cleaning Specialist welcomes news from readers. Make sure you keep us up to date with developments by calling Peter Muir on **01296 715228** or emailing **prochem.newsdesk@pmpr.co.uk**



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Mind your Qs and As
Looking after cleaning machines

cleaning specialist

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Lights, camera, action

INTERESTED in learning more about Prochem Europe products? If you have read the book (in this case, the catalogue), soon you will be able to see the film.

Prochem is undertaking a major initiative in video guidance on how to operate and carry out basic maintenance on its carpet cleaning machines and accessories.

"Most people agree that being able to see and hear about operating and maintenance procedures is easier than reading how to do it," says Prochem marketing manager Peta Tilley.

The films are to be distributed both

on DVD and streamed from the Prochem website for those with broadband internet connection. "Our aim is eventually to have the whole Prochem range on film at the click of a mouse," says Peta. "All visitors will have to do is click on the 'videos' link on the home page, choose the machine that they are interested in, and the film will play."

She points out that the films summarise key points and are not designed to replace machine user manuals. "Cleaners should always consult these for detailed maintenance advice and reference to spare parts."

Look out for further news on Prochem 'How To . . .' films in the next issue of Cleaning Specialist.



CMS show

NOVELTY and a fresh, bright image drew record numbers of visitors to the Prochem stand at the recent CMS cleaning show in Berlin.

"The show was better attended than the previous one two years ago," says national sales manager Paul Robinson.

"We had visitors from all over Europe, and particularly from the eastern bloc countries, attracted by our new corporate image and the range of machines and chemicals on show."

The main focus of attention on-stand was on Prochem portables and truck mounts.

"Many visitors had not seen a truck mount before and were very impressed when we demonstrated the show model's cleaning ability," reports Paul.

Prochem overseas agent, Marcin Czolnik, agrees. "We would demonstrate a portable firstly, and then show them the truck mount at work," he says. "People could not believe the difference in power."

With growing interest in Prochem Europe products in a number of overseas territories, CMS looks set to be a permanent fixture in the company's exhibition diary.

Prochem on show in '06

CLEANING shows in the UK and Netherlands will feature the latest offers from Prochem Europe this year.

The company is exhibiting at Carpex at London's Excel in March, closely followed by Interclean at the RAI Centre, Amsterdam, in May.

Says Prochem's Paul Robinson: "Both of these shows are becoming increasingly important shop windows for new developments from Prochem

and of course it's always a pleasure to see our friends and customers at them."

Carpex is from March 16 to 17, while Interclean runs from May 9 to 12.

ProfChem's in pole position!

A LEADING janitorial supplies wholesaler in Poland is winning in more ways than one with Prochem Europe.

Specialist importer ProfChem has taken up sponsoring motor racing with the Prochem brand – a mark of its success in the emergent Polish marketplace.

The company is focused exclusively on selling Prochem Europe products through its own distribution network. It's a strategy that is making ProfChem one of the most dynamic of Prochem's export customers, says Prochem overseas agent Marcin Czolnik.

"Prochem products have a very good reputation in Poland," he says.

"We got started in 2001 with a very simple range of just eight products and today customers are using over 30 different products which they can now source from a Polish language special edition of the Prochem catalogue."

The Polish market differs in many ways from the UK's. The use of carpet is per capita much less, with most consumers preferring natural wood floor instead. Price levels and purchasing power also contribute to a more limited market for carpet cleaners in the residential sector than in Britain.

Because of the distance from Chessington to Poland, distribution is effected via

specialised import companies such as ProfChem and Daunpol.

The latter is another leading wholesaler, with 10 branch offices throughout the country. As stock is held in Poland, all distributors benefit from overnight shipments of orders.

Both importers continue to invest further in their Prochem offer, with recent initiatives online and in motor racing – the only team sport to be using the company logo.

"Poland is an increasingly important market for Prochem and the company's products are beginning to attract interest in other eastern European territories as well," says Marcin.

Web watch:
www.profchem.pl



US approval for Prochem

SEALS of Approval have been awarded to Prochem's **Everest** truckmounted cleaning machine and **B122 Neutral Pro-Spotter** spot remover by America's Carpet and Rug Institute (CRI), a leading source of science-based information and insight on carpet and rugs.

Machines undergo a stringent testing process at an independent laboratory that measures the amount of soil removed, amount of water left in the carpet sample, and impact of the equipment on carpet fibres and appearance.

"The Everest came out on top," reports Prochem Europe MD, Alan Tilley.

"Machines that exceed average

soil removal standards receive a bronze rating. Those achieving higher standards receive a silver rating, and those achieving the highest level of soil removal, such as the Everest, are awarded the gold level Seal of Approval."

Testing protocol

The testing protocol for machines uses sophisticated X-ray fluorescence (XRF) technology to measure the precise amount of soil removed from a carpet sample. XRF was developed by private industry and enhanced by NASA for the space shuttle programme.

In addition to certifying machines, the



CRI Seal of Approval programme sets test methods and performance criteria for spot removal.

B122 Neutral Pro-Spotter was tested on carpet with yellow mustard, grape juice, hot black coffee, chocolate syrup, permanent marker, dirty motor oil and synthetic soil. The product was also tested for rate of colour change and resoiling. Plain water is used on an additional sample of stained carpet as a control.

"We are pleased to see a distinction being made between truly effective stain removal products and those that don't even clean as well as water," says Alan. "The CRI is raising the bar for all carpet cleaning products."

Web watch:
www.carpet-rug.org



Triple A goes ape for Apex

THEY bought a **Blazer** – business doubled. They bought an **Apex** – business doubled. Truck mount cleaning means big business for Aberdeen's AAA!

"I don't know where it's all coming from!" laughs Brian Marr. He's talking about the business streaming into the family company he set up in 1978 when son Steven was a toddler.

Now the pair steer the enterprise together, each armed with a new sign-written Ford Transit – inside which nestles a Blazer Plus (dad's) and, newcomer to the Prochem range, the diesel-powered Apex (son's).

Perhaps AAA Carpetcare gets the work because people find it first in the phone book?

The Marrs think not – "it's mostly recommended, domestic work where presentation is paramount," says Brian.

"The vans look great, nicely sign-written with Prochem decals, and sporting matching personalised licence plates. And we have a strict 'no jeans, no trainers' policy, preferring to use our branded workwear."

AAA offers professional carpet and upholstery cleaning services for commercial and domestic applications, with the latter accounting for 85 per cent of turnover. "We do look after hotels, restaurants and

commercial premises as well, but favour homes," says Steven.

The Marrs can clean carpets in a five-bedroom house in 1.5 hours for £180 and get paid straight away. "With commercial, you can do the same thing but wait five months to be paid," Steven points out.

Success

Success came relatively recently. "We were driving about with a machine in the back of the car getting nowhere fast," recalls Brian. "I decided to buy a truck mount and opted for a Prochem Blazer Plus. We use their chemicals and particularly stain and spot removers, and this machine seemed an ideal first step up from portables, being simple to operate and very economical.

"It's got a multi-stage heat capture system which does away with the need for a water heater by using exhaust gas to heat the solution water, which means lower fuel costs and reduced maintenance requirements."

The Blazer caught the public's eye as Brian and Steven found the workload easier to meet with the hungry truck mount; turnover doubled in one year.

"So we bought another one!" says Steve. They chose Prochem again ("fantastic

machinery!" he enthuses).

This time, the new Apex diesel caught their eye. Launched in 2005, this dual-wand unit features an uprated 'low-noise' diesel engine option with upgraded solution pump.

The two have been astounded at the fuel saving achieved and the added power available. "Our diesel costs are about £1.50 an hour and the machine is powerful and, because you don't have to run it flat out, not too noisy – which I thought it may be," says Brian.

And since acquiring the Apex, business turnover for AAA Carpetcare has doubled again. Now the Marrs are keen to grow their business further, so another truck mount purchase is being planned for May this year.

Steven has promised himself to get some training at the next Prochem Manchester regional course – "if I can find the time!" he laughs.

Web watch:

www.aaacarpetcare.co.uk



Heat Wave for County View

A NEW cleaning business run by an enterprising pair of friends has already made Prochem's new **Heat Wave** a staple in a successful cleaning system approach that is finding them good fortune in the



northern Home Counties.

Dave Tew and Ben Saunders, both 26, are joint managing directors of County View Cleaning Ltd – and they love Heat Wave. "We saw it in the new catalogue and decided to give it a try, as we do get a fair bit of build-up from other chemicals," says Dave. "We are over the moon with the results," he continues.

"The cleaning is unsurpassed and the fragrance is nice too. The connectors have hardly any build-up from separation, so we will be using this as much as possible with our **Blazer XL** truck mount system."



Web watch:

www.countyviewcleaning.com



how to use

Sweet smell of success



FIRST impressions count – and nowhere more so than in a care home.

Yet too many first impressions are being undermined by the smell of urine greeting visitors to many care and social services environments.

The fact is that a family looking for nursing care for an elderly relative is unlikely to choose a nursing home if it smells unpleasant.

Odour control

The outcome will be comment in the community about the lack of odour control in the nursing home. This will impact on levels of residency, which will in turn impact on the home's profitability.

In the public's view, offensive odour equates with lack of cleaning. The solution from Prochem Europe is one of its most successful chemicals.

B153 Urine Neutraliser is a specially formulated acidic deodorant for neutralising and deodorising urine deposits in carpets and fabrics. It neutralises odour on contact and prevents staining. A yellow-tinted liquid with a fresh fragrance, it comes in a ready-to-use one-litre spray, and as concentrate in a five-litre container for dilution 1:1, pH4.

B153 Urine Neutraliser will deodorise and chemically neutralise urine on contact, to prevent permanent staining and unpleasant odours during cleaning. However, as urine may cause a permanent stain, Urine Neutraliser may not be effective in removing old urine stains.

B153 Urine Neutraliser has applications in a wide range of environments in addition to care homes, hospitals and other healthcare environments. Public transport, hotels, restaurants, schools and prisons can benefit from using this product, as can any houses with young children or a pet in residence!

Pre-testing

B153 Urine Neutraliser can be used on carpets, fabrics and upholstery, subject to pre-testing for colour-fastness. It may also be used for hard surfaces and urinal cleaning and deodorisation.

Now available FREE: A NEW hospital, nursing and residential home user guide, explaining in easy-to-follow pictures effective urine decontamination, stain removal, carpet cleaning and odour control.

How to use B153 Urine Neutraliser

On fresh urine stains:

1 Liberally apply **B153 Urine Neutraliser** undiluted, directly to the contaminated area with the trigger sprayer.



2 Blot with clean white towel, mop or sponge and allow the area to dry.



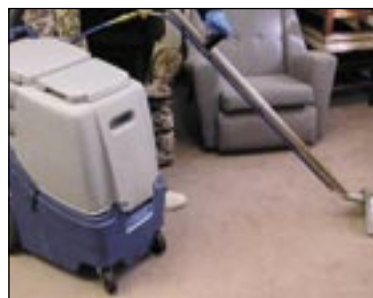
For old stains and heavily contaminated areas:



1 Liberally apply **B153 Urine Neutraliser** undiluted or diluted with an equal part of water, to the contaminated area.



2 Brush in and allow to dwell for up to 15 minutes.



3 Rinse extract out with a hot solution of **B109 Fibre & Fabric Rinse** or **S775 Extraction Pro**.



4 If odour persists, spray **A222 Odour Neutraliser** over the area after cleaning, and leave to dry.

Prochem growth in county sales

PROCUREMENT and supply departments of local authorities in southern England are broadening the range of Prochem Europe solutions offered to cleaners and to the advisers assisting social services and care homes who source such products.

An example of this progressive trend is Hampshire County Council's Hardware Buying Team, based in Winchester, where it is helping social services and schools specify products to protect carpets against infection by bacteria such as MRSA.

Hampshire County Council works in partnership with Portsmouth City Council, Southampton City Council and West Berkshire Council. Hampshire is also one of the leading members of the Central Buying Consortium (CBC), the biggest public sector buying organisation in Britain. Together with fellow CBC members Hertfordshire and Kent, Hampshire has a clear focus on cleaning issues and works closely with



Stephen Pinch, cleaning buyer.

hygiene and cleaning advisers for schools and social services.

Cleaning equipment, together with a wide range of other products for helping run county facilities, is purchased from an annual 800-page catalogue and an online catalogue, both managed by the marketing team of Hampshire's Corporate Procurement and County Supplies operation. Last year, Prochem featured five new products in the catalogue and turnover of its sales to this region has subsequently more than doubled.

Stephen Pinch, who leads Hampshire's hardware and cleaning buying, has advised on the purchasing of Prochem products for over 10 years. "Prochem identified a core market requiring more than just basic shampoo, notably in social care for the elderly," he says. "Starting with general-purpose cleaning agents, we have gone on to build up an even more niche-specific range of solutions."

Developed

Working with Stephen's team, Prochem developed a four-product-strong system using **Odour Fresh**, **Stain Pro**, **Extraction Pro** and **Urine Neutraliser**. Additionally, the county also placed cleaners on Prochem training courses. "Word got around to the extent that the system is now at the core of carpet cleaning in social services homes, with an increasing number of schools also picking up on it," says Stephen.

"Last year, we expanded our Prochem range to take in **Clensan®**, **Coffee Stain Remover**, **Multi Pro**, **Microsan®** and **Citrus Gel** and the market for these continues to grow."

Stephen sees Hampshire's strength in doing more than simply supplying cleaning products. "We act as an impartial provider of market requirements to suppliers and of specialist products and services to customers and advisers," he says. "By increasing knowledge, we empower customers to have the confidence to buy more task-specific and therefore effective solutions to the problems they face day to day."



Hampshire County Council supports an advisory group for caretakers, and the specialised knowledge of Prochem is made available to this group and to caretakers in the field. "Caretakers are not necessarily carpet cleaning specialists, so it is very useful to have Prochem's regional representative, Roy Pardoe, on hand to pitch in with advice," says Stephen.

New Prochem solutions currently sold through Hampshire's 2005-06 catalogue include Microsan. "Traditional disinfectants may be effective against MRSA and similar bacteria on hard surfaces, but not on carpet," says Stephen.

Looking ahead, whilst other counties have been offloading the operation of care for the elderly to the charity and private sectors, Hampshire is enhancing its services and expanding bed numbers in care homes. "We are keen to ensure hygiene in these environments remains of the highest standard," says Stephen, "and we know there will be similar targets for cleaning of schools."

Web watch:

www.hants.gov.uk/county_supplies



MITIE good cleaning!

PRESTIGE carpet cleaning business formerly sub-contracted by MITIE Cleaning (Southern) is to be handled by a new in-house specialist cleaning team.

Operations from April 2006 from the company's Yateley, Hampshire, premises are being headed by Dave Traynor.

"Our aim is to take on direct the prestigious contracts previously carried out on our behalf by sub-contractors," he explains.

"Our new service will be able to provide specialist carpet cleaning, hard floor maintenance, deep cleaning of toilets and refurbishment cleaning."

A team of six technicians undertaking the work have received training from Prochem in carpet and upholstery cleaning, as well as completing Stages One & Two of the BICSc Cleaning Operators Proficiency Certificate.

MITIE Cleaning (Southern) has equipped its vehicles with Prochem technology, including the **Steempro Powerplus** and **TM4 Fiberdri** machines. Prochem chemicals are also being used exclusively for carpet and upholstery cleaning.

"The service, training and advice given to us by Prochem has been excellent," says Dave.

"We look forward to working together in the future and to broadening our service to include new business external to MITIE."



MITIE's specialist team with their fully-equipped vehicle.

Web watch:
www.mitie.co.uk



Tempest blows up a storm



A NEWCOMER to the building fire and flood damage restoration business brings the pedigree of a successful east of England independent cleaning specialist.

Martin King's Xtraclean is behind the launch of Tempest Restoration, a company set up to provide damage mitigation and restoration, including drying and fire decontamination.

Tempest's staff are on call, 24/7, to tackle fire and flood damage. "In essence, our service is that of a one-stop shop, ranging from emergency pre-cleaning and decontamination to dry cleaning and laundry, painting and decoration and providing storage facilities," says Martin.

Extensive experience

The company additionally provides a wide range of drying equipment, including air movers, dehumidifiers and desiccants.

An important market for the company is insurance and loss adjustment. Martin has extensive experience of the sector as

a former contractor to another disaster restoration contractor.

"We created a national experience and developed many important contacts," he says. "When that business closed, I decided to create my own business solutions to the needs of this market."

The business mix at Tempest is 70 per cent in favour of insurance, with the balance taken up by commercial companies, including builders.

Operating from King's Lynn in Norfolk, the company covers its home county, Suffolk, Cambridgeshire and parts of Essex and Lincolnshire.

Xtraclean, meanwhile, has expanded its fleet of truck mount cleaning machines to three with the acquisition of a new Prochem **Blazer**. "Prochem technology and chemicals play a major role in the successful fulfilment of our services," says Martin.

He sees strong opportunity to extend the reach of both businesses into further regions in the UK. "One of our main aims in 2006 will be expanding organically," he says.

Web watch:
www.tempestrestoration.co.uk



All about linoleum...

Linoleum is still in fashion after 100 years. Paul Rogers, Technical Services Manager at Forbo, looks at a tough, natural solution in smooth flooring.

If you are after a hard-wearing floor covering, linoleum is hard to beat – and it's been proving itself for 100 years now.

But if you were after a visually dynamic floor, it is only relatively recently that design technology has converted a rather worthy but reliable mainstay of schools, factories and hospitals into a fashion item for home, restaurant and office use, too.

■ What is the difference between vinyl and linoleum?

To some, these floor covering types may appear similar, as both come in sheets or tiles and both are resilient floor coverings.

However, vinyl is a synthetic product, whereas linoleum is truly natural, made from sustainable raw materials by only four manufacturers left in the world.

Its eco-credentials have a lot to do with the new markets captured by lino. Being a natural product, it is the preferred flooring option from an ecological perspective.

■ How natural?

Lino is manufactured from linseed oil, pine rosin, limestone, jute and wood flour.

Linseed oil is the most important raw material used to make linoleum. It is obtained by pressing the seeds of the flax plant and is oxidised when combined with a resin-based fatty acid called Tall oil, a recycled, post-industrial by-product of the Kraft paper industry.

Rosin, the binding agent in linoleum, is tapped from pine trees without affecting their growth. Together with linseed oil, rosin gives linoleum strength and flexibility.

Wood flour is used to bind the colour

pigments and to ensure colourfastness. Using wood flour helps to achieve an especially smooth surface.

Forbo uses recycled timber or timber grown in controlled European forests, where every tree that is felled is replaced.

Beautiful

Linoleum's beautiful colours are created by using ecologically responsible pigments, which don't contain heavy metals such as lead and cadmium.

In the manufacture of linoleum, linseed oil is exposed to the air in a succession of thin films until it is of a rubbery consistency, or is thickened by heating until it becomes a spongy mass.

After this, it is ground, mixed with pulverised wood and other ingredients, and then pressed into sheet form by rollers and applied to a backing material such as jute or hardened canvas.

Drying rooms

This is then heated in enormous vaulted drying rooms, which toughens the linoleum.

Fully biodegradable at the end of its long lifespan, linoleum is renowned for its hygienic properties: its smooth surface prevents dirt and dust from penetrating, making it easy to keep clean and dust-free.

As a completely natural product, linoleum's performance is enhanced over time and durability increases. The floor is quiet, warm and comfortable underfoot.

Organisations looking for flooring with outstanding product performance, easy maintenance and lowest life cycle costings find linoleum the perfect solution.

Where vinyl colours and designs set out to imitate natural products such as wood, stone, glass and metal, linoleum is available in a range of contemporary and



traditional marbled designs and can even be produced as a solid colour.

Not restricted to flooring, linoleum is also suitable as a surfacing material, proving an opportunity for co-ordinating colour schemes and designs to great effect. The legendary durability and richness of colour are due to the carefully selected natural raw materials that go into the making of linoleum.

Forbo Flooring is the world's oldest resilient floor covering manufacturer and the largest producer of linoleum.

Its flagship linoleum brand, Marmoleum®, can reduce exposure to allergens responsible for some common allergies, such as asthma, and has been awarded the British Allergy Foundation Seal of Approval.

For further details on Forbo linoleum products ring 01592 643777 or email info.uk@forbo.com

Web watch:
www.marmoleum-g2.co.uk



The art of clean

LINOLEUM is an extremely hard-wearing and highly durable floor covering, and with correct maintenance using the appropriate products, it will last for decades.

The prime consideration when cleaning linoleum is to use mainly neutral products of around pH7. It may be damaged by high alkalinity, which can cause problems such as surface damage and colour change, and these problems are generally irreversible.

When linoleum is new or in excellent condition, regular maintenance may only require the floor to be dust-mopped and then damp-mopped with a neutral detergent.

First dust-mop or vacuum-sweep to remove dust and grit. Failure to remove surface dust and grit could cause surface scratches and premature wear.

Small areas are usually dust-mopped with a 24in. impregnated flat cotton swivel-head mop, which has the advantage of retaining the dust and debris. Larger models are available to suit the size of the area.

Brush-vacuumed

Alternatively, dust can be brush-vacuumed using a dry filter vacuum (sweeping brooms are not recommended). All corners should initially be brushed out by hand ready for pick up by mopping or vacuuming.

Use a flat swivel-head mop with a standard figure of eight movement, ensuring that one edge is kept as the leading edge and thus keeping the accumulated dust to the front edge until you have completed your sequence.

Then pick up all accumulated dust with a filter vacuum and also vacuum off the mop

head. Only once the linoleum is thoroughly dust-mopped should you proceed to damp-mopping.

Use a neutral detergent such as **C254 Prodet**, always adding the product to the water and not the water to the detergent, and, in this case, use cool or lukewarm water only.

Remember

It is worth remembering at this point that buckets should never be placed directly on the floor surface as they may leave a permanent ring mark. The solution should be changed frequently so that all parts of the linoleum are damp-mopped with clean solution.

When these maintenance procedures are no longer an effective means of removing surface soil from the linoleum, then a spray or scrub clean is the only answer.

Once again, if possible, only neutral detergents should be used. Highly soiled areas, which have been subjected to constant heavy foot traffic or continual scuffing, and where soil has become ingrained, may require a more active detergent such as **A250 Alklean**.

Begin by dust-mopping, then damp-mopping, the entire surface of the floor.

For spray-cleaning, a high-speed rotary machine is required (approximately 300rpm), fitted with a drive board and a red pad.

The cleaning solution is sprayed lightly from a finger sprayer as you go and immediately picked up by a pass of the machine.

Cleaning products should always be tested in a small inconspicuous test area if



there are any doubts as to how effective they are and also whether or not they are too harsh for the linoleum, causing damage to the surface or yellowing. Always use products at the dilution rates on the label and according to the manufacturer's instructions.

Failure to use a final neutralising rinse such as **C255 Prorinse** may result in leaving sticky residue on the surface.

Worn

Over time and in particular with heavy use, the surface layer of the linoleum may become worn and dull in places. It will require a finish to restore a uniform shine.

First (on worn linoleum only) apply a coat of seal, for example **R602 Proseal**, which is a water-based acrylic seal. Then apply two to three coats of **C503 Proshine**, an emulsion polish. This can be applied on to a clean floor. C503 Proshine is best



ing linoleum. . .

applied in thin coats with a flat mop, starting approximately one metre away from the skirting board.

Pour a small amount of the solution (undiluted) on to the linoleum and absorb into the mop, which should be moistened with water first.

Proceed to mop on to the floor in a right to left motion.

Cover the floor in this way and allow it to dry (approximately 30 minutes). Apply a second coat at right angles to the first coat and again allow it to dry.

Cross-coating

A third coat can then be applied in the same manner as the first. This procedure is known as cross-coating.

It should be noted that it is only necessary to apply one coat around the edges near the skirting boards.

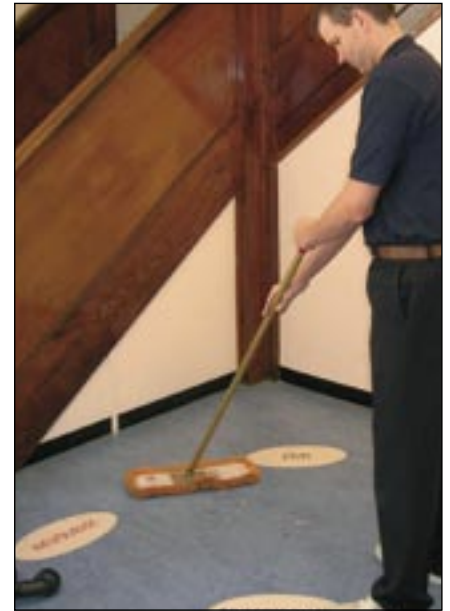
Do note that Proshine should be allowed to dry and harden before any renewed foot passage.

An alternative to this is regular spray-cleaning with **C502 Protreat**, using a red pad on the rotary machine, which will maintain a shine on the linoleum. Always avoid making the floor slippery by over-application of the product.

Along with its many other attributes, linoleum is naturally anti-static. This means that it repels dust, dirt and pollen particles naturally.

With regular maintenance, as described above, it will provide a hard-wearing and beautiful floor covering that will last for many, many years.

For further information on products for maintaining or cleaning hard/resilient floorings, please call the Prochem technical and training helpline on 020 8974 1515 or visit www.prochem.co.uk



Dust-mopping.



Making up a solution.



Damp-mopping.



Spray-cleaning.



Applying Proseal/Proshine.

From Denmark to Everest



ISLANDS attract all sorts – and for all sorts of reasons: the girls, the work, the weather.

And they are the qualities which brought the Isle of Wight its only Danish cleaning specialist: Bjarne Jorgensen. He is married to Ann, a local girl. He loves his job. And the weather? Well, it is much colder in Denmark!

Bjarne has been working on the island for over 21 years now. After some years working for ISS in Denmark, he started Irving Contract Cleaning on the island as a window and office cleaning business and soon employed five people.

“Carpet cleaning came later and we were using three portables before acquiring our first truck mount in 1991,” he recalls.

Bjarne chose a Prochem Cub. “I could see that they were the way forward, though I didn’t tell my wife we had bought one!” he laughs. The machine was something of a novelty at the time. “No one else on the island had one and a lot of our competitors teased us when they saw it.”

But two years later, when Bjarne noted that the number of carpet cleaners advertising in the local Yellow Pages had dropped from 16 to only six or seven, he knew he had done the right thing.

“The truck mount cleaning concept changed the nature of our business enormously,” he said.

“We bought a Performer three years later and took on a lot more carpet cleaning business – to the extent that it replaced the contract cleaning arm of the company, which was becoming an increasing problem in personnel terms.”

Trusty

In November last year, Irving replaced the trusty Performer, which had completed four thousand hours of solid and reliable work, with a brand new Prochem Everest.

“It’s a high-performing machine with a simpler design,” says Bjarne. “It can produce heat on demand and is even easier to operate and quieter in use. It’s a big step forward from the Performer in many ways.”

The Everest comes in two specification packages: the standard 1200psi unit and the HP model providing up to 3000psi for hard surface cleaning and pressure washing.

Both come powered by a liquid-cooled Nissan 46HP petrol engine with an 80-gallon waste tank, aluminium frame, dual wand capabilities, last-step chemical injection, warm-water chemical tap, chemical flow simulation valve and shut-down identifier lights.

Today, Irving cleans at 600 regular sites each year including 1,000 domestic addresses in addition to its commercial business.

Busy

Incredibly, all of this business is on the island alone. “But then there is plenty to do here – and it is very busy in the summer holiday season,” says Bjarne.

Over sixty per cent of Irving’s business comes by recommendation. Contracts include cleaning the island’s Royal Yacht Club, nightclubs, holiday camps and the home of entertainment supremo Robert Stigwood. The company also looks after a number of local authority sites.

Presentation is all-important to Bjarne. “Looking the part is vital, particularly with the quality domestic business,” he says. “Customers set a lot of store by how you appear.”

So much so, that Bjarne changes his van every three years without fail. “Yes, it costs me to have the truck mounts taken out and then installed in the new vehicles but the cost is worth it,” he says.

And the future? He has between three and six cleaning jobs a day – “and that’s not all day so there’s plenty of opportunity,” he declares.

“I am making as much working from 9.30 to two in the afternoon as I did working all day using portables. The capacity is there and we shall be taking on some help this year.”



Web watch:
www.irvingcontractcleaning.co.uk



Playing it safe for COSHH

If you use or supply chemicals then you should be familiar with Safety Data Sheets (SDS) and their importance in ensuring a safe workplace and the protection of the environment.

Safety Data Sheets are an essential information source when making a risk assessment as required by the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) regulations. In this article we will try to address some of the more common queries we receive regarding Safety Data Sheets.

Safety Data Sheets – Some of your queries answered:

• *“Where can I get the latest Safety Data Sheet for a Prochem product?”*

Safety Data Sheets are freely available, in either electronic or hard copy format, for all of our chemical products by post, fax, email or downloadable from our website: www.prochem.co.uk

Prochem Safety Data Sheet updates are also now available in Adobe PDF format via an electronic mailing list. If you would like to take advantage of this option and be added to the list to receive the latest sheets by email as and when they are updated, please contact our Sales Department, who will send you a form to complete.

• *“I have received the new Safety Data Sheet for a product, but am unsure of what changes have been made since the previous version?”*

At the end of Section 16 of the Safety Data Sheet is the date of the previous version and a list of which sections have been revised.

• *“How do I know whether a product is classified as hazardous for supply?”*

To find out whether a product is hazardous, one must refer to either the product label or Section 15 of the Safety Data Sheet, which shows the product classification, if any, and the appropriate Risk phrase(s).

• *“Section 15 of the SDS states the product is not classified as hazardous for supply. However, Section 16 indicates ‘R22 Harmful if swallowed’ and ‘R36 Irritating to eyes’. Is the product classified or not?”*

No, the product isn’t classified as hazardous for supply. If classified, then this will be indicated in Section 15. The risk phrases indicated in Section 16 are for reference and refer to the individual classifications of raw material

ingredients listed in Section 2, not for the preparation as a whole.

• *“Do I need to wear gloves or other PPE when handling this product?”*

Sections 6, 7 and 8 of the Safety Data Sheets provide guidance on what Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is recommended when using our products. It is important to take into account the specific circumstances in which you will be using the product when deciding upon appropriate PPE.

• *“I have used ‘Brand X’s’ product and have suffered a skin rash while using it. What could have caused this?”*

Unfortunately Prochem is unable to give health and safety advice on other manufacturers’ products, as we will not have access to full details for the product concerned. Should you have any queries regarding another manufacturer’s product you should contact the appropriate manufacturer/distributor who should be able to advise you accordingly.

• *“I’ve got copies of Safety Data Sheets for all the products I use – that’s that, my COSHH assessment complete, isn’t it?”*

No. Collation of Safety Data Sheets for the products you use is just one of the first in a series of steps, as part of carrying out a COSHH assessment. Our Safety Data Sheets contain detailed information which should be referred to when carrying out your assessment.

• *“Can Prochem carry out a COSHH assessment for me?”*

Although Prochem can offer advice on the safe use of our products, we are not a Health & Safety Consultancy and are unable to carry out a COSHH assessment for users of our or other companies’ products. Employers of hazardous chemical users have a duty under COSHH to carry out a risk assessment related to the manner in which the hazardous chemical will be used. Employers must, therefore, decide whether they have the expertise to carry out the assessment, or to seek the assistance of a competent Health & Safety professional.

• *“Where can I find out further information on COSHH and what my Health & Safety obligations are?”*

Further information, including a number of free leaflets, on understanding Safety Data Sheets, labels, COSHH and other Health & Safety advice is available from the Health & Safety Executive (HSE) website: www.hse.gov.uk

Web watch:
www.hse.gov.uk



Munters thinks Steempros are ace



A LONG-standing business relationship has borne fruit for Sheffield-based Ace Janitorial.

The Prochem Europe distributor is supplying one of the country’s leading fire and flood damage restoration specialists, Munters, with a carpet-cleaning package, including Prochem chemicals and its Steempro Powermax extraction machines and accessories.

Munters is also buying Prochem Supernova 800 machines for large area commercial jobs and the compact Bravo and Spot Pro for small tasks.

Ace’s Paul Cullumbine works closely with Munters Group’s Craig Scandrett and his manager, Neal Clarke, who reported: “We are experiencing staggering business. It comes through the quality of work and service we provide to customers and that’s why we work with likeminded companies such as Ace.”

“We’ve known one another for 10 years now,” says Paul. “Craig worked for a car valet company in Mansfield and I advised him on the best equipment and chemicals to use, and supplied him with a full customised package.”

“Since then, Craig has always stayed in contact whenever he needs advice or equipment because he knows I will only recommend the best.”

When Craig joined the Munters Group, he recommended that the company call on Paul’s expertise to advise on carpet cleaning, pressure washing, submersible pumping equipment and related needs.

“It’s progressed from there, really,” says Craig. “The Powermax is just as Paul promised – it’s built to a high standard and is robust, powerful and reliable. Our technicians appreciate the build quality and how quiet it is.”

“It’s also easy to get the machine in and out of the vans thanks to the multiple lifting points and “under handle” gripping feature.”

Craig concludes: “Whenever we need top-quality equipment packages we can always rely on Paul and Ace Janitorial to supply us with the right equipment for the job.”

Web watch:

www.munters.co.uk
www.acejanitorial.co.uk



Prevention better

John Taylor looks at keeping truck mounts running year-round . . .

IF A door squeaks long and loud enough, it will probably get oiled. This is true of the equipment you operate. But unlike the hinge in the door, it cannot wait to be lubricated – when you hear a squeak or noise on a piece of equipment, it may be too late.

Most mechanical equipment needs some type of service from time to time; this is also true of carpet cleaning equipment

So, follow the manufacturer's guideline on preventive maintenance. Most manuals have a maintenance chart, indicating the type of service to be performed and the

intervals for that service.

While truck mount service is determined by the hour meter rather than a speedometer, there is a direct relationship between engine hours and miles driven.

Engine speed

For example, when a vehicle travels at 70mph, the engine speed is approximately 2,500rpm, so for each hour of running the vehicle would travel 70 miles.

When your truck mount runs at 2,500rpm, it is comparable to driving a vehicle 70mph; therefore, each hour of operation would be the same as travelling 70 miles.

When the truck mount has logged 1,000 hours on the hour meter, that is

the equivalent of driving 70,000 miles.

Preventive maintenance for a van at 70,000 miles would have seen all tyres changed at least once, engine oil and filters changed many times, belts replaced at least once, same with the battery, engine air filter changed four or five times, engine tuned up and wheel bearings repacked.

Preventive maintenance is important during the summer and winter months. During the winter months, truck mount components will run cooler and mask a high temperature problem. For instance, a blower that is running low on gear oil or bearing grease may survive in cooler temperatures; however, in the summer months the blower may overheat and fail.

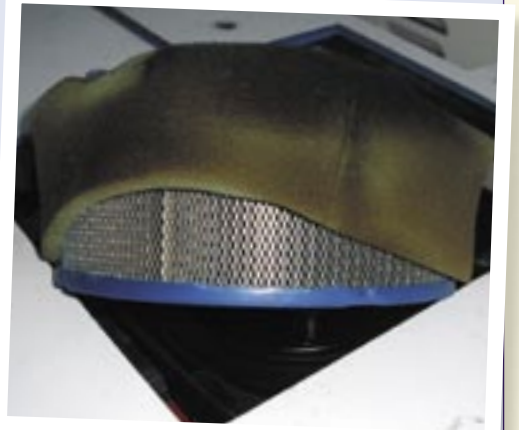
Air filter clear?

KEEPING the air filter properly serviced will also help the engine to run cooler. If the air cleaner is dirty or blocked, the airflow through the carburettor will be restricted. If less air enters the fuel system, the engine will run rich (more fuel/less air). If the engine is allowed to run rich, it may foul the spark plugs, the engine will lose performance and engine temperatures may increase.

This is especially important on air-cooled engines. The air-cooled engine

depends on air from fins on the flywheel, pushing cooling air through the engine cooling fins and out of the back of the engine. If the engine is not running at the correct revs due to a plugged air filter, it is working harder to pull the load but running slower due to poor performance.

If the unit is air-cooled, be sure to inspect the flywheel intake area for obstructions, and check engine-cooling fins for any build up of debris.



Oil levels OK?

CHECK oil levels in the water pump, blower and engine frequently to ensure proper levels are maintained. Low

oil levels may not properly lubricate, increasing friction and raising oil temperatures.

Be careful not to overfill. Adding too much oil allows the oil to foam, thereby losing its ability to cool and lubricate with a resulting increase in oil operating temperatures.

If multi-grade oil such as SAE 10W30 is used in the winter months, you may want to use SAE30 for the higher heat of summer. Consult the engine oil section in the operator's manual for recommendations.



Bypasses

CHECK bypass systems for proper operation. If any scaling is present, descale the unit with an approved descaler. Keep water softeners properly charged to reduce chance of scale build-up, especially during seasons with higher temperatures.

Keep a close eye on pressure hoses for signs of wear, particularly the quick disconnect at the wand. Rotate hoses to help extend hose life.

Whether it's a miserable freezing day or a blisteringly hot one, you don't want to be caught with a breakdown.

than cure

Coolant system?

IF THE unit is water-cooled, check the condition of the coolant system. Anti-freeze will keep the unit from freezing in the winter, but also acts as a coolant in the summer. Spot-check radiator hoses, hose clamps, radiator cap and coolant levels.

Anti-freeze coolant should be changed periodically as coolant additives will break down and foreign material will enter the system.

Changing the fluid will require a radiator flush kit. While flushing the radiator, check the rest of the coolant system. Radiator hoses should be inspected for any visual leaks or damage. Squeeze the hose in various locations. Replace the hose if you discover any spongy or soft spots, which indicate that the hose may be ready to burst.

After draining and refilling the coolant system, bleed or burp the coolant system.

To bleed the system, fill the overflow bottle to the proper level and run the unit until it reaches operating temperature. Locate the petcock or bleed valve within the coolant system, open the bleed valve and allow the air to escape.

If you own a Prochem unit, the bleed valve or petcock is conveniently located on the top of the helicoil.

Attach a hose from the helicoil petcock nipple to the overflow bottle. This will allow the coolant to flow through the system without losing any coolant or allowing the engine fan to blow coolant all over the engine.

Inspect the front of the radiator for obstructions, such as debris blocking the radiator cooling fins. Check to make sure the fins are not bent. The radiator cap should also be inspected. Check the seal for damage and general appearance.

Check the overflow bottle regularly. If the coolant level in the bottle is going down, it may indicate a leak or loss of coolant. As a final step have the coolant system pressure checked for leaks or loss of pressure.



Finally... DO count preventive maintenance not as 'downtime' but 'downtime prevention'.

Belt check?

CHECK the water pump belt for wear or signs of glazing. Most industrial water-cooled engines use wrapped belts so the sides of the belt may become hard or glazed.

If this happens, the belt will look very shiny on the sides, which will prevent it from gripping the pulley and cause slipping. If slippage occurs, the water pump will not be turning at the proper speed, causing overheating.



NEW Prochem Heat Wave:
high performance
in high heat



Super strength carpet detergent for use in the most powerful truck-mounts. Performs at high temperatures while maintaining stability and 100% clarity. Heat Wave's ingredients will not separate under high heat, reducing residual deposits and clogged wands.

CAUTION: Irritating to skin. Risk of serious damage to eyes.

PROCHEM.

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Scott's Spot 'N' Stain May Day

TWENTY years' successful trading in cleaning supplies is being celebrated at West Yorkshire distributor Scott Janitorial Supplies in May 2006.

The family-owned company is holding an Open Day for customers at its Keighley premises, where Prochem, among nine exclusive guest exhibitors, will be

providing a special Spot & Stain seminar. Jangro-member Scott Janitorial has developed into a 16-strong team working out of a 15,000 sq ft warehouse.

"We're delighted that Prochem is going to be with us on the day," says sales director Patrick Scott.

"We've achieved a steady level of

growth over the years and we're looking forward to celebrating that success with our key suppliers and customers."

Web watch:
www.scottjanitorial.co.uk



High quality key to long life

SUPPLY quality to customers who appreciate quality and who will pay a fair price for it, and you can't go wrong.

That's been the philosophy at Mid-Warwickshire Cleaning Supplies, which declares its objective as part of its marketing strategy.

Mid-Warwickshire Cleaning Supplies operates from wholly-owned 4,500 sq ft warehousing and offices in Warwick.

"It's a goods-in, goods-out operation with a trade counter and plenty of room for customers to come in and take a look round," says managing director Peter Cooke.

Peter started his business in 1972, working from home with goods in a covered yard. "I got a van and off I went," he says.

"It was a different world back then. Customers had less expectation of cleaning products than today and there were only three companies in the Midlands doing the same thing. There is far more competition about today."

Development

Peter realised early on in the company's development that standing still would be 'death' to his business. "We aimed for quality early and with no silly discounts."

Customers – ranging from contractors and independent professional cleaners to end users such as local authorities, colleges, hospitals and schools – visit the premises to catch up on the latest introductions and have a chat with the staff of six on site.

Alternatively, cleaning products are shipped by its own daily 'next day' delivery service with a bulk or 'urgent' order 24-hour service anywhere within a 40-mile radius of its warehouse.

The company services the Midlands, north to Stoke, and south to London.

Peter has seen success come from adding value. "We do more than sell commodities," he says.

"We answer questions, give advice, share information – that's how you keep customers and grow your business.

"Better-quality customers want to know more. I guess knowledge is power!"

Training is another area where Mid-Warwickshire Cleaning Supplies has scored.

"We do a lot of in-house training for contract cleaners and hospital cleaners, in addition to going into the field to train," says Peter.

The company recommends Prochem training constantly: "Our aims are complementary," says sales manager Richard Ward, who is also Peter's son-in-law.

"Prochem accounts for a significant share of sales of cleaning products. Products like **Extraction-Pro** and the traffic lane cleaners go well and we are selling more deodorisers now."

The company has moved into the healthcare sector within the past five years. "It's going very well," says Peter.

"Since we moved into the healthcare sector, we have seen increases in odour control systems sales and in specialist lines like **Microsan®**."

MID-WARWICKSHIRE
Cleaning Supplies

Right: Peter Cook,
managing director,
and below, Richard
Ward, sales manager.



The company offers the entire Prochem machine range.

"End users go for small machines, professional cleaners go for larger ones," says Richard. "We try to build packages for what people need to grow their businesses. Growth equates with sales."

Mid-Warwickshire Cleaning Supplies is one of the few cleaning supply companies to have been awarded the prestigious ISO 9002 award.

"This award, in common with so much of what we do here beyond storing and shipping products, is part of why we trade well in what has been a flat market for others," says Peter. "We give the customers what they want."

Web watch:
www.mwcleaningsupplies.co.uk



Tom goes big

TRUCK mount cleaning is the way to go for Tom Sultana of All Gleaming Clean in Bromley, Kent. But the machines do take up more than a fair bit of space.

Tom's answer is simple: buy a bigger truck. After six months' wait on a special order, he has taken delivery of his £33,000 Mercedes 416 twin-axle long-wheelbase panel van.

Now, this is what we call a truck! It's a rare beast this side of Dusseldorf – fitted with the most powerful engine option, it is used mostly for ambulance work, where something special is required to pull all that equipment at high speed.

Whizzing

Last summer found Tom and son, Ben, whizzing around the highways and byways of Kent and south London, with bags of room to spare on board for accessories and a portable or two. "It's just great," he declared. "It's a real show-stopper wherever it goes."

The Merc is home to Tom's Prochem Performer, newly liberated from a Ford Transit. "You get more work done using these machines," says Tom, who also runs a Prochem Cherokee portable. With the



Performer, two of us can work a job in two hours instead of the six that a portable would take."

Tom and Ben enjoy a 60/40 split in domestic to commercial work. "Domestic has changed a lot, with many more competitors about," he says.

"Too many of them compete on price, which we keep well away from. We are experiencing a 70 per cent increase in referral and call-back work from our domestic customer base and we are very happy with that."

Not that there's anything shabby about the commercial side of the split.

All Gleaming Clean is contractor to the Salvation Army's imposing headquarters in south London as well as 10 of its churches.

It has also won new business at Gatwick Airport, with contracts at various BAA administration sites in airfield operations and 'landside'.

"We're keeping very busy," says Tom. Now the question is, will that Performer outperform another new van? "It'll probably outperform me!" laughs Tom.

Web watch:
www.allgleamingclean.co.uk



Full steam ahead

STRONG growth in a competitive region is being met by Solihull-based Steam Team, thanks to Prochem truck mount cleaning technology.

For boss Nigel Hyams, success is measured by having to buy another machine and van, taking on some much-needed help, and knowing that all the new business coming in is recommended – "just the best you can have," he says.

Nigel has just bought a Prochem Blazer. "I'm chuffed to bits with it," he reports. "I have had a Prochem Cub truck mount for some years and thought that was good. But this machine excels further – with improved vacuum, water temperature and easy-to-use controls."

Nigel has been in business for 15 years and has built up a good and steady client

base, with a 50/50 split between domestic and commercial work. "We do hotels, offices and lots of nice homes," says Nigel. His *pièce de résistance* is Studley Castle: not exactly an everyday customer?

"No," laughs Nigel. "The castle is now a conference centre and hotel. My wife was there one day when someone tipped an entire bottle of red wine on to a carpet. She called me on my mobile and it turned out I was just round the corner, so I whipped round and removed the lot.

"The owners were so impressed, I clean the entire building now. I've been working there for ten years and it's still a wonderful experience to clean it!"

The Steam Team service is focused on the benefits of truck mount cleaning for carpets: fast, effective and hassle-free, with

all services contained in a vehicle on the drive. The company adds value with hand cleaning of oriental rugs and on-site dry cleaning of curtains and fabrics.

Nigel uses Prochem cleaning chemicals exclusively. "I have tried others but keep coming back to these," he says. "I stick with what I know works best and I think that's Prochem."

Nigel is so busy he has not even had time to take the free Prochem training that comes with his new Blazer. Nigel plans to put that right in 2006 and get some more training under his belt. "It doesn't do any harm to have a brush-up," he said.

Web watch:
www.steamteam.co.uk



training



Be prepared..!

A MAJOR push on the benefits of training at Prochem focuses in 2006 on the opportunities it brings.

“Training is all about being prepared for whatever the customer needs,” says training marketing executive, Linda Sinet.

“Someone may be an old hand at carpet cleaning, but would they be able to tackle

that unexpected upholstery job?”

For cleaners, upholstery cleaning can be a very lucrative add-on to regular carpet work. The sector is diverse, ranging from a three-piece suite in a home, to a car interior, to an entire cinema of upholstered seating.

“One day on a Prochem training course would provide the knowledge and the confidence to accept that unexpected job,” Linda explains, adding that the opportunities

are not restricted to upholstery.

“Cleaners may say they are not particularly interested in the hard and resilient floor business, but installations of hard floors in both the commercial and domestic sectors continue to grow,” says Linda.

“It’s a pity to have to turn a cleaning job down due to a lack of skill and know-how that could be acquired in a day.”

Prochem training.
The smart way
to **grow**
your **skills**



Call for further information
or visit our website

PROCHEM.

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Training – more dates than ever

CUSTOMER demand for greater opportunity to train on Prochem’s most popular courses is being met this year with added dates for carpet, upholstery and hard floor cleaning.

Says Prochem training marketing executive, Linda Sinet: “Training underpins the success of the Prochem cleaning philosophy. Research last year into customer preferences revealed a need for providing more date options across our core courses and we have responded with greater choice than ever before.”

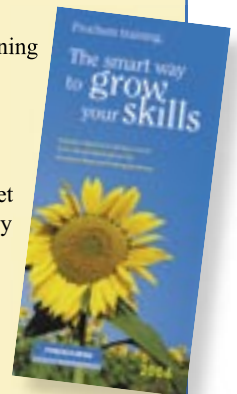
Carpet cleaning courses are being held most months, while upholstery and hard floor courses take place every other

month, accounting for nearly 50 working days in 2006.

Courses are held at

Prochem’s National Training Academy in Chessington, augmented by one-day regional carpet and upholstery courses held in Bristol in June, Dudley in September and Manchester in April and October.

For further information on Training with Prochem Europe, call 020 8974 1515, email sales@prochem.co.uk or visit www.prochem.co.uk



Keeping quality employees

Professional speaker, Christine Corelli, looks at how to be the best boss you can be...



THE cost of employee turnover is too high. You expend too much in recruiting, advertising and training, let alone the lost productivity, increased stress, and low morale that comes with frequent turnover. Now, triple all this if a person has been a valuable asset to your company.

Why would a quality employee leave? Some reasons such as receiving a better offer, opting for a new career opportunity, family issues or personal problems, are beyond your control. Most situations, however, are within your control.

According to studies, management is one of the main reasons why quality employees leave.

Look elsewhere

If they are working for someone who does not respect their worth or treat them well, they will look elsewhere for employment. Here are a few negatives that bad bosses exhibit that result in resignations:

1 Bureaucratic management style: Quality employees need little supervision. They enjoy responsibility because they want to rise to the challenges given to them. If their manager 'micro-manages' by doing and taking the glory for everything, then quality employees feel as if they are neither trusted nor respected. "Let me know if you need help," is a better way.

2 Insincere: A leader who gives lip service will lose the trust of quality employees who are looking for their leaders to be open, honest and follow through on commitments.

3 Does not set an example for others to follow: If a leader insists on employees treating customers well, then that same leader better treat his/her employees well.

4 Incompetent: Nothing can frustrate quality employees more than a leader who is inept. If a leader has poor leadership and communication skills, or even no basic skills for the job, quality employees will not want to work for them. People want to work for someone they can respect, admire and learn from.

5 Inaccessible: Whether a manager intentionally ignores employees' concerns or is truly too busy, the message is the same: he or she doesn't care enough about people to give them the attention and respect they deserve.

6 Tolerates under-performers: Quality employees lose respect for leaders who do not address performance issues with problem co-workers. Good employees care about the company they work for and so will often cover for those not pulling their weight – but they won't be happy about it. If a leader thinks he/she can avoid dealing with the weak employee because the work is getting done, they are setting themselves up for far worse problems down the road.

Remember – when the situation is not

addressed, it's not the under-performer who will leave, but the top performer.

7 Unappreciative: Quality employees want to hear "Thank you" every now and then. Likewise, "I appreciate what you are doing for me and the company." Surely, it is the least the manager can do for a good employee?

8 Does not equally distribute workload: Some managers have a tendency to "punish" employees for good performance. In other words, if quality employees do an excellent job in one area, they can find themselves having to take on responsibilities in other areas, too. Before long, they are doing far more work than their colleagues. Eventually, they suffer from burnout and move on.

9 Does not resolve conflicts: Conflict occurs in most companies. A good manager is proactive in heading off problems, or, at least, will quickly resolve conflicts, regardless of the nature of the issues.

So, no matter how many people work with or for you, are you the best boss you can be? Or look at it this way, would you work for YOU?

Christine Corelli is a professional speaker, consultant, and author of "Wake Up and Smell the Competition". Visit her website www.christinespeaks.com to sign up for "Corelli's Clips" – a FREE publication of ideas and solutions to problems.

Mind your Qs and As



Some answers to your questions on looking after cleaning machines, with Paul Robinson . . .

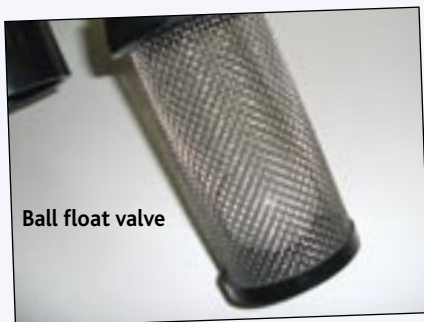


Q The forecasters expect a very cold winter for Britain this year. Are there any precautions I should take with my cleaning machines?

A Yes! Don't leave your machine where it might get frozen, for example in your vehicle overnight or in an unheated building. Frost may damage your pump and can affect hand tools. Wands and the brass K valves in the trigger are particularly vulnerable. To avoid a machine freezing between jobs, pump out all the solution from the machine, hand tool and wand after use, and make sure they are well insulated by keeping them in a warm environment and even wrapping them in an old blanket, or something similar.

Q My machine has a ball float valve. What does this do?

A It helps to protect the vacuum motors from being flooded by excess water being extracted into the waste tank and back through the vacuum motors. As the waste tank fills with dirty water, the ball float rises until it reaches a certain level,



Ball float valve

when it shuts off the vacuum. However, sometimes small amounts of foam may get through, so don't always rely on this ball valve – check the waste tank regularly and empty it before the ball valve reaches the cut off point. Note that it will not stop foam from entering the vacuums; always use a defoamer to prevent excess foam build-up in the waste tank.



Spray tip with chemical build-up.



Filter with chemical build-up (right)



In-line strainer with deposit (left).

Q I've noticed a chemical build-up around the filters of my machine and spray tips on my wand. Why does this happen?

A The usual answer is that you may be using too much chemical product. Always measure chemicals to the correct dilution rates – don't just glug it in! And try using **B109 Fibre and Fabric Rinse**; this will help to flush out the system, as will pumping 5–10 litres of hot water through the solution tank at the end of each working day. While on this subject, remember that there are in-line strainers located behind the spray tips on the wand; these need to be taken out occasionally and cleaned.

TIP: If the outside of your machine has product residues and looks dirty, try using Powerclean sprayed on to the machine and then wiped off. You'll be amazed how clean the machine will look and how better presented your business is as a consequence.



Cut power lead.

Q The power lead from my machine has a cut in it; can I just use some insulating tape to repair it?

A No. That would be a health and safety risk for you and those about you. You must replace the complete power cable and plug assembly with Prochem part number BE4901 (three-core 1.5mm with a sealed 13-amp plug unit).

This should be carried out by a qualified maintenance person and the machine would need to be PAT-tested afterwards.

Q Can I have an engineer visit me if my machine needs a repair?

A Yes. Prochem offers on-site maintenance contracts via an approved service provider for the first three years of a machine's working life. These are available at additional cost and cover call-out, labour and parts for year one, and then call-out, labour and parts at list price, less 15 per cent discount for years two and three. Please contact your local Prochem dealer or Prochem's sales office for further details of this service. **NOTE:** The service contract is between you and the maintenance provider.

distributor focus

Emergency service

WHAT do you do when your pump packs up in the middle of a cleaning job?

If you are in Sussex and a customer of Southern Counties Janitorial Supplies, then the problem is on the way to being sorted, says professional cleaner, Rapide Carpet and Curtain Cleaning.

Caught out by the first heavy frost of the year, Rapide put in a call to Southern Counties for help. Within half an hour, one of the company's engineers had fitted a new pump.

Says Rapide's Tim King: "A good reputation is one thing but this was above and beyond the call of duty!"

Reliability

Southern Counties' Andy Kent says the company has maintained this level of service to customers since 1967, when dad Roy started the business

"Service and reliability were watchwords and they have not changed," he says.

Andy and his brother, Nigel, have each served over 30 years at Southern Counties, where the business has gone from strength to strength.

The company today operates from depots in Brighton, Crawley and Worthing. "If you are in the county, you are effectively only ever 15 minutes away from one of our depots," says Nigel.

Extensive

Southern Counties stocks over 3,000 lines, including an extensive offer of Prochem carpet cleaning ranges, for collection from any one of its trade counters or delivered next day.

Stocks are kept adjusted to the maximum levels with a twice-weekly delivery to Crawley and Worthing.

"With a policy of one hundred per cent fulfilment of order on first drop with our deliveries, we feel that we continue to progress Roy's original aims, striving towards customer satisfaction," says Andy.

Web watch:

www.southerncountiesjanitorial.co.uk



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Clean take-off

IT'S always handy to have a reliable cleaning service that can drop in when you want it!

Judging by this picture (see right), that's what cruise line P&O must have been thinking when it hired Gerrards Cleaning Services to clean the newly commissioned ship, 'Artemis'.

Boss Simon Gerrard admits that his van does not often take to the air but Gerrards has been with the shipping company for more than 15 years and flexibility in all matters is important to this customer.

"We had been called in to clean the entire ship at Bremerhaven in Germany, where she was being refitted," he says. "Two weeks in and we were still working but she had to sail, so we had the van hauled on board."

Swinging

That meant craning Simon's Ford Transit up to 150ft and swinging it across to the tenth deck where it remained for the sea crossing to Southampton. Gerrards' Performer Bearcat truck mount can clean up to 500ft away so there was plenty of work that could be accomplished, says Simon.

A life on the ocean waves sounds so glamorous but the reality is somewhat different, says Simon.

"First, you have to love working on ships and have good sea legs," he says. "Secondly, you are not on board to play – there's work to do and lots of it. The average cruise ship has 26 miles of carpet and thousands of pieces of upholstery, all of which must be maintained in pristine condition.

"You can forget the old adage that you don't get high quality at high speed, because in this game you have to."

On a typical turn round, Gerrards has to clean about 1,100 square yards of carpet in three and a half hours – no excuses.

"Most cleaners give up when they hear this," says Simon. "The way to get the job done is to understand the



Simon Gerrard with his trusty 16-year-old Performer. Right: Simon's Ford Transit is swung on board the 'Artemis'.



environment and its challenges, and have the right equipment, chemicals and team."

Gerrards know the ropes at P&O: "We know every corner of every cruise ship on the fleet as well as the crews."

Between 30 and 40 times a year, Simon drives from home base in Wigan to Southampton, staying at a local hotel, before getting up early the next day to meet his team of local cleaning specialists and then drive to the docks to park up and start cleaning.

Gerrards operates what must be one of the oldest working Performers in the UK. "It's 16 years old, with 8,500 hours on the clock and has just taken delivery of its third van," says Simon proudly.

He has worked out that the Bearcat has earned the company about £2 million in its working life. "It runs as sweetly as it did when we bought it," he says.

He puts its longevity down to the sheer quality of the machine and its parts and, of course, regular servicing. "I do it myself – with a little help from John Taylor, Prochem's service wizard."

Using the appropriate chemicals is equally important in Simon's view. "We are doing more work with four staff than we did five years ago with seven and that's down to the Prochem systems," says Simon. "The machines are great and the chemicals just get better."

Quality

"This latest generation of products from Prochem is the best yet and the quality just keeps getting better and better."

He is a big fan of new products Heat Wave and Power Burst. "They are the best chemicals in the range as far as I am concerned," says Simon.

"I have been using them on a nightclub carpet back in Wigan and the owners could not believe how the carpet colour has come back."

So, it's not all sun and surf for Gerrards. "Oh no, we get on to terra firma and do restaurants, hotels and homes much as other cleaning businesses," says Simon.

But he admits that the lure of a life at sea remains as strong as ever.

It's not all life on the ocean wave for Gerrards – the company also has a thriving land-based business, serving restaurants, hotels and homes.



Web watch:
www.gerrards-cleaning.co.uk



Mind your Qs and As

Some answers to your questions on the use of cleaning chemicals, with Peter Hargreaves. . .



Q Ultracac Renovate is very good on draught marks but it is not always available at my local distributor. Have you anything else that I could use instead?

A Yes, a new product called **B171 Filter-Out**, with an exclusive technology developed to defeat the particle charge and release the soil much more easily. It can be used on draught marks, carbon and soot as well as toner spills. B171 comes ready to use in a handy one-litre sprayer.

A Yes, **B845 Citra-Boost** is a product you can use for this, not only in carpet cleaning but also for hard floors and upholstery. The dilution rate is very good at one part B845 to 66 parts of pre-spray solution.



Q I have been using your upholstery cleaners for years and have always been happy with the results. Has anything new evolved in recent years which is especially good on wool fabrics?

A Yes, indeed. Prochem has formulated a detergent that blends several different attributes into one: encapsulation of soil, breakdown of soil and anti-soil properties. All this, coupled with a very economic dilution rate of one part of **B106 Fine Fabric Detergent** to 66 parts water makes it a very useful product to have at your disposal. Another benefit is that it is "Woolsafe" approved and especially suitable for use on wool and wool-rich fabrics, and delicate fibres which are wet-cleanable.



Clean can be used as a pre-spray, as a spotting solution, as a truck mount extraction detergent and in portable extraction machines. When used as a pre-spray it does require 10 minutes' dwell time.

Q Prochem already has a good range of detergents. Why add another one, ie **Heat Wave**, to it?

A That's because we are continually updating the range of products to keep up with new developments – or to simply give the cleaner more choice. **S778 Heat Wave** has been formulated to give greater stability at high temperatures.

One of the problems with some detergents is that at high temperature they can separate out into their different compounds. This will not happen with **Heat Wave** so it is ideal for those jobs that require high temperature. Another benefit is that residual deposits and the possibility of clogged wands is greatly reduced.

By the way, note that the dilution rate of **Heat Wave** is just phenomenal: one part **Heat Wave** to 640 parts water!



Q As a cleaner I often get asked if I have any products that are environmentally friendly and free from soaps, fragrance, optical brighteners, enzymes or solvents. Do you have such a product in powder form?

A Being in "yes mood" this issue, the answer is: yes, we do. **C409 Pure**

Q Sometimes I find that with very stubborn oily and greasy soil, I don't have the appropriate pre-spray to hand. Do you have a product that can be used as a booster when added to other pre-sprays?



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