



Deputation to Toronto Board of Health on Monday, May 30, 2016

Dear Members of the Board:

My name is Sidney Chelsky. I am the Executive Director of the Ontario Fabricare Association. Our members are located throughout the GTA, as well as throughout the Province of Ontario, Our association was previously known as the Dry Cleaners & Launderers Institute of Ontario (DCLI). Our membership is made up of the leading dry and wet cleaning operators in the province and we provide continuing education to our members including Environmental Safety for our employees, our customers and the public. Our members have been involved in **Environment Canada's Green Clean Project (October 1995)** and work in partnership with Seneca College in the continuing education and Environmental Certification of dry cleaning operators throughout the province.

Our association is currently working with the Ontario Ministry of the Environment in achieving self-regulation of the industry and our association will oversee this project. In addition, we will provide annual inspections of every cleaning plant in Ontario, including those in the GTA. Our mandate will be to inspect plants using all solvents that are being used and to insure that they are being used in a safe manner.

Many in our industry have started the process to offer wet cleaning services. As pioneers in the industry, they have spent hundreds of thousands of dollars in equipment upgrades. Regardless of what the equipment and detergent manufacturers state, not all garments can or should be wet cleaned. There are ramifications to recommending that dry cleaners change to wet cleaning only. Garment manufacturers are creating many clothes today that say "Dry Clean Only". That means no water. Just after the Green Clean Project concluded almost 20 years ago, we were excited about wet cleaning everything. Then reality set in. Dry Cleaners received garments for dry cleaning. The care label said, "Dry Clean Only". Wanting to experience the new wet cleaning recommendations, the colours bled and cleaners had to pay the customers thousands of dollars in claims for not following the care instructions on the care label. During the Green Clean project for the first 6

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months, 50 % of claims were made for colour and dye running, 40% for shrinkage and 10% for stains and cracking of a rubberized coating. The current wet cleaning equipment and detergents available have increased the ability to wet clean safely, but not by 100%. Many in our industry think the number is closer to 90%.

Garment manufacturers in North America including clothing designers will have to make their garments cleanable in water. This is a daunting task and highly unlikely since apparel stores and manufacturers are reluctant to recommend wet cleaning. Will an expensive wool suit look better wet cleaned or dry cleaned? The consumer will be the judge. The Federal Trade Commission requires that care labels on garments list a successful method of cleaning, and failure to adhere to the care label instructions can lead to garment damage and financial losses to the cleaner. Government will have to convince apparel manufacturers to produce garments that are serviceable in wet cleaning.

In summary, we recommend the best way to reduce solvent consumption in the short term in Toronto or anywhere for that matter are for annual inspections to take place to insure compliance to Federal and Provincial and Municipal regulations. In today's dry cleaning plants, the equipment is "environmentally friendly". Most, if not all machines, are operated on a dry to dry cycle significantly reducing the amount of solvent being released into the atmosphere. Unlike wet cleaning, we do not put solvents and/or detergents down the drain. This will weed out the bad operators.

Over the long term, allow for the dry cleaning industry and technology to catch up to your concerns. If you fail to provide enough time for change, dry cleaners will be forced out of business or forced out of Toronto. Prices for dry cleaning will rise to offset the cost of transportation to service existing locations and purchases of this new equipment and result in more vehicle congestion and pollution.

The Ontario Fabricare Association supports all attempts to reduce the use of chemicals in the dry cleaning industry and continues to work closely with its members, other associations and manufacturers to this end.

As well, our association stands ready to work in partnership with the City of Toronto in promoting safe methods of cleaning including wet cleaning.

Submitted by: Sidney chelsky, Executive Director OFA

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