

Dry-Cleaning Regulatory Update

New Federal rule requires that dry cleaning facilities co-located with residential properties must phase out the use of perchloroethylene by Dec. 21, 2020.

Overview

Ohio EPA is working with small businesses to reduce releases of chemicals and assist them in their efforts. This bulletin highlights pollution prevention opportunities to increase the compliance, success and competitiveness of your dry-cleaning business.

Pollution prevention strategies, which include using environmentally friendly products and practices, can reduce the risk of improper chemical management, reduce environmental liability, save money and increase worker and customer satisfaction. Even though perchloroethylene (PERC) has been used for decades as the dry-cleaning solvent of choice, several safer alternatives, including water, are available in the use of professional wet cleaning process.

New Regulation

In 2008, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency amended the *National Perchloroethylene Air Emission Standards for Dry Cleaning Facilities*. Part of this included a requirement for the phase-out of PERC machines co-located with residential buildings. Existing co-residential dry cleaners must phase out these machines by Dec. 21, 2020. This requirement can be avoided if PERC is not used.

There are close to 300 dry-cleaning operations in Ohio currently utilizing PERC. While most dry cleaners only use small amounts of PERC annually, the large number of dry cleaners across the state that use PERC could have a large impact on the environment.

Financial Assistance

The Ohio Air Quality Development Authority (OAQDA) is an independent, non-regulatory state agency that provides financial and technical assistance to help businesses comply with environmental regulations. The agency is a confidential resource and serves as Ohio's small business ombudsman to advocate on behalf of these businesses. Cost-effective financing and grant assistance are available for small business owners who are seeking to purchase more environmentally friendly equipment to control air pollutants emitted during their operations as well as encountering a financial hardship to achieve federal compliance.

For dry cleaners impacted by this new federal rule, OAQDA can help fund the purchase of new machines that eliminates the use of PERC. If interested, please call OAQDA at (614) 466-6825 or visit their website at ohioairquality.ohio.gov.

Contact

For more information about this upcoming requirement, contact our free and confidential assistance program by calling our hotline (800) 329-7518 or visiting our webpage at epa.ohio.gov/ocapp.

Case Study — Long Cleaners

Long Cleaners of Dayton, Ohio is a family-owned and operated dry cleaning company with a commitment to develop better practices and systems to reduce their environmental impact and produce a superior product for their customers.

Recently, Tom Perry, the owner, purchased a new dry-cleaning machine with the assistance of OAQDA's Clean Air Resource Center program.

The new machine uses an organic solvent, eliminating the need for PERC. The results have been outstanding with reduced energy use and water consumption, zero toxic waste, better cleaning ability, and no odors.

According to Tom, the organic solvent cleans as well, if not better, than PERC, while being neither a dangerous material nor hazardous substance and is ultra-pure, ensuring the best cleaning with no odor.

