

# **DO NOT HIRE ANY OTHER CARPET CLEANER UNTIL YOU'VE READ THIS CONSUMER'S GUIDE TO CARPET CLEANING**

***Read this guide and you'll discover:***

- How to avoid four carpet cleaning rip-offs!
- Five costly misconceptions about carpet-cleaning!
- Crawl-in critters and crud: A guide to the slime, grime and livestock that's seeping, creeping and galloping through your carpet!
- Which method cleans best?
- Six mistakes to avoid when choosing a carpet cleaner!
- The importance of value and price!
- Do you want a clean, healthy carpet?
- 4 steps to a fresh, clean, healthy carpet!

Dear Homeowner,

Choosing a carpet cleaner isn't easy.

Why? Because you're bombarded with misleading advertising, confusing claims and simply bad information.

From super-low prices and high-pressure sales, to unqualified technicians and near-worthless methods. How do you ever find a qualified, competent, professional carpet cleaner?

You start by reading this *Consumer's Guide*. In this fact-filled booklet, you'll discover how to avoid four carpet cleaning rip-offs; avoid eight mistakes when choosing a carpet cleaner; and get four steps to a fresh, clean, healthy carpet.

We wrote this guide to help you better understand carpet cleaning. Now, with this information, you can make an informed, intelligent decision.

And if you have any questions about carpet or upholstery cleaning, you're invited to call us at (615) 228-7771. We have dedicated our business to educating consumers. We'll be happy to help you in every way.

## **HOW TO AVOID CARPET CLEANING RIP-OFFS**

### **RIP-OFF #1**

#### ***UNBELIEVABLY LOW PRICE***

To some degree, all of us are attracted by low price because we want to work within a budget. But some carpet cleaners use price as the bait for their false and misleading advertising. They offer a cheap price-usually between \$3.95 and \$9.95 per room. Then once they are in your home, they pressure you into buying "add-ons". It's as if you were buying a car and found the dealer was charging you extra for the tires and steering wheel. Carpet cleaning is not as cheap as some unethical carpet cleaners would like you to believe.

## RIP-OFF #2

### **BAIT AND SWITCH**

Dual process carpet cleaning describes the process of shampooing or heavy preconditioning, followed with hot water extraction cleaning. Unfortunately, unethical carpet cleaners often use dual process as a bait-and-switch technique. Here's how it's done: First, they "bait" you with a basic cleaning (single process) at an unbelievably low price. Then when you call, they try to "switch" you to more expensive dual-process cleaning. If you don't fall for their switch and choose their basic service, you'll likely receive poor workmanship using little or no chemical and they will not guarantee their work.

## RIP-OFF #3

### **UNSUPPORTED CLAIMS**

#### ***"THIS CLEANING METHOD IS THE BEST"***

You'll read this in almost every ad. You'll hear this from virtually every carpet cleaner. Remember this: the method that is best for you is the method that achieves your goal. If you want a method that dries quickly, then a method that takes a long time to dry isn't the best for you. So before you choose a carpet cleaner, identify your objectives. Then select the method that best reached those objectives

## RIP-OFF #4

### **OUTDATED BELIEFS**

#### ***"HOT WATER DAMAGES YOUR CARPET"***

Years ago many people believed this was true because their carpets were damaged by 'technicians' who didn't know how to properly clean using hot water. But today, we know it's false. By washing and then rinsing your carpet with hot water, your carpet is thoroughly cleaned- in the same way that the person who showers and then rinses off the dirt and soap will be much cleaner than the person who takes only a sponge bath.

## **COSTLY MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT CARPET CLEANING**

### **MISCONCEPTION #1**

#### ***You should wait as long as possible before cleaning your carpet.***

No. Dirt is an abrasive, like sandpaper. Every time you step on your carpet *you* grind dirt into the carpet fibers. This cuts your carpet, just as if you had used a knife. This cutting causes your carpet to wear out faster. A dirty carpet will not last as long as a clean carpet. And while vacuuming helps-by itself, it's simply not enough. The longer you wait to have your carpet cleaned, the more damage you do to your carpet and the faster it wears out.

### **MISCONCEPTION #2**

#### ***The only reason to clean your carpet is to remove the dirt.***

No. As you probably know, outdoor air contains pollens, fungus, bacteria, air pollution, cigarette smoke, car exhaust, and hundreds of other chemicals. When you come into your home, you carry those pollens, bacteria, and chemicals in your hair and on your skin, clothing, and shoes. Not surprisingly, all those chemicals and toxins wind up in your carpet.

If you have allergies, asthma, emphysema, or other breathing problems, one major source of your problem could be the pollens, fungus, smoke, and chemicals in your carpet.

### **MISCONCEPTION #3**

#### ***One method of carpet cleaning is as good as another method.***

No. The dry-cleaning methods-which are dry foam, dry chemicals and dry compounds, do not rinse your carpet in any way. Instead, they leave a dirty residue. You might say they clean your carpet only halfway. The most effective cleaning method is hot water extraction.

Hot water extraction means a hot water cleaning solution, under high pressure, is forced into your carpet and then suctioned out of your carpet. Shaw Industries, the world's largest carpet manufacturer, recommends hot water extraction as the primary method of cleaning carpets, along with an IICRC (Institute of Inspection Cleaning and Restoration Certification) approved cleaner.

Carpet cleaners use one of two types of hot water extraction. If they use a large unit that operates from a van or truck outside your facility, it is called truck-mount extraction. If they use a small unit that can be brought inside, it is called portable extraction. Shaw's first choice is the truck-mounted unit. They recommend the small, portable unit only in areas where the truck-mounted unit won't reach.

Truck-mounted extraction cleans much better because it heats the water to a higher temperature, which breaks up the dirt, bacteria, chemicals, and pollens in the carpet. Then the machine uses high suction to draw the dirt and chemicals out of your carpet. (This is the method Professional Carpet Care uses.)

### **MISCONCEPTION #4**

#### ***Having the right equipment is all a company needs to clean your properly.***

Not true. Many companies own hot-water cleaners but very few companies teach their employees how to use them properly. This is why it is important that you choose your carpet cleaner carefully. The best cleaning companies are those whose technicians are certified by the Institute of Inspection, Cleaning, and Restoration Certification, known as IICRC. Before you choose a carpet cleaner, ask to see written proof of IICRC certification of the technician who is going to do the job. If they don't have one - don't use them'

### **MISCONCEPTION #5**

#### ***The company that offers the lowest price is the company you should hire.***

No. I've seen so many problems arise from lowest-bid companies that I suggest to you NEVER hire the company that quotes the cheapest price. The two most common problems are: The price may not be for the services you want performed. The company may be equipped to remove only the dirt from your carpet. But you may want bacteria, fungus, pollens, dust mites, stains, and tobacco residue removed as well. The price you see advertised may not be the price you pay. Many homeowners have learned that the low price they saw advertised lasted only until the carpet cleaner got into their home. Then they were pressured into paying a lot more for a variety of add-ons. (Some carpet cleaners even break the law by using illegal bait and switch tactics.)

## **CRAWLIN' CRITTERS AND CRUD**

### ***A Guide to the Slime, Grime, and Livestock that is Sleeping, Creeping, and Galloping Through Your Carpet***

Asphalt. Bacteria. Car Exhaust. Chemicals. Dirt. Dust. Dust Mites. Earth. Food Particles. Fungus. Germs. Gravel. Grease. Grime. Grit. Hair. Industrial Waste. Lint. Mud. Pet Stains. Pollens. Pollutants. Rock. Sand. Scum. Smoke. Soil. Soot. Tar. Tobacco Smoke. Urine. Vomit. Plus, don't forget living creatures, such as dust mites, fleas, and critters that live, hide and breed in your carpet.

## **WHICH METHOD CLEANS BEST?**

### **Dry Foam**

The carpet cleaner applies shampoo to your carpet, allows it to dry, and then, without rinsing, suctions the dried shampoo into a vacuum. Can you imagine applying shampoo to your hair, allowing it to dry and then removing the shampoo from your head with a vacuum? This method leaves dirty, sticky residue in your carpet, which is one reason dry foam is not too effective.

### **Absorbent Pad (Bonnet Cleaning)**

This method is similar to dry foam except the company sets a large cotton bonnet on your carpet and with a floor polishing buffer machine on top then "buffs" the carpet. The rotating motion causes the bonnet to absorb dirt from the top side of your carpet. Bonnet cleaning is like trying to use a large cotton towel or mop to rub the dirt out of your carpet. It isn't an effective deep cleaning process, but it is the way some companies offering "dry cleaning" clean your carpets, then claim "fast drying" times.

### **Dry, Absorbent Powder**

The dry-compound method spreads a moist, absorbent powder through the carpet. The powder is allowed to dry and then vacuumed. This method leaves dry sponge particles at the base of the carpet yarn. This method is used predominantly for fabrics that are harmed by water such as sisal. However, since the carpet is not rinsed, this method also is not very effective.

### **Hot Water Extraction**

This is a fancy way of saying a hot water cleaning solution, under high pressure, is forced into your carpet. Then the solution, as well as the dirt, is vacuumed. This method is often referred to as "steam cleaning".

In a recent Technical Bulletin, Shaw Industries, the world's largest carpet manufacturer, "recommends the hot water extraction system, which research indicates provides the best capability for cleaning."

There are two types of hot water extraction systems:

#### **(1) Truck-mount Extraction:**

Using a large machine mounted in a truck or van

#### **(2) Portable Extraction:**

Using a small, hand-held unit.

On which type to choose, Shaw's Technical Bulletin states:  
"[cleaning] can be done from a truck mounted unit outside the facility with only the hose and wand brought inside, or where a truck mounted unit cannot reach, by a portable, self-contained system brought into the facility."

As you can see, Shaw recommends the truck mount unit first. This isn't surprising. You see, the truck-mounted unit cleans much better because it heats the water to a high temperature and sprays the cleaning solution into the carpet at high pressure. This breaks up the dirt, bacteria, chemicals, and pollens in the carpet. Then the machine produces considerable vacuum volume to draw the dirt and chemicals out of your carpet.

Some people believe that hot water damages your carpet, but this isn't true. By washing and then rinsing your carpet with hot water, we clean your carpet completely. In the same way the person who showers and then rinses off the dirt and soap will be much cleaner than the person who takes only a sponge bath.

## **MISTAKES TO AVOID WHEN CHOOSING A CARPET CLEANER**

### **MISTAKE #1**

#### ***Choosing a carpet cleaner based on equipment alone.***

No question, your carpet cleaner needs first-rate equipment. But he also needs something else. He needs employees who are skilled at operating that equipment. Many companies own hot-water extractors but very few companies teach their employees how to use them properly. The best chemicals and thorough knowledge of how those chemicals work and which is the best to use in each individual cleaning situation is just as important as the equipment itself. The best way to know a company's employees have been properly trained is to make sure the technician has been certified by the Institute of Inspection, Cleaning and Restoration Certification (IICRC). Before you choose a carpet cleaner, ask to see written proof of the company and the technician's IICRC certification.

### **MISTAKE #2**

#### ***Choosing a carpet cleaner based on low price.***

Low price could be a problem in three ways: (1) Low price can be the bait that attracts your phone call. Once the cleaner gets into your home, he pressures you into a much more expensive job. (2) Low price can be for single-process cleaning. Rarely does the consumer know what this means and, when told, asks for dual-process cleaning instead, which costs much more. (3) Low price means the carpet cleaner has cheap equipment, which will not effectively clean your carpet.

### **MISTAKE #3**

#### ***Choosing a carpet cleaner based on a single telephone call.***

Instead, invite the person to your business and ask for a specific written quotation. If they arrive at the actual cleaning appointment in your home, get an exact quote in writing before any cleaning begins. Then you'll know exactly what the carpet cleaner recommends- and you won't be the victim of high pressure tactics when the technician is finished and surprises you with an outrageous bill at the end of the job.

### **MISTAKE #4**

#### ***Choosing a carpet cleaner who doesn't offer a guarantee.***

In my view, every carpet cleaning company should be fully accountable for its work. If you aren't pleased with the job in every way, you shouldn't have to pay for it. Period. Not all carpet cleaners offer a guarantee. If they do, the guarantee may be "limited". Ask the carpet cleaner if he offers a guarantee and then make sure the carpet cleaner includes his

guarantee on his written quotation. If you are not happy with the cleaning you receive from Professional Carpet Care we will reclean your home to correct the problem.

#### **MISTAKE #5**

Choosing a carpet cleaner without checking with the Better Business Bureau. Any carpet cleaner can say anything about his past jobs. Sadly, some of what he says may not be true. Make sure you check with your local Better Business Bureau to make sure the company is not only a registered member, but also does not have any open or unresolved complaints against them.

#### **MISTAKE #6**

##### ***Choosing a carpet cleaner who doesn't use the truck mounted, hot water extraction system.***

You might expect this from us we use this type of method, but there are several good reasons why we say this. Portable hot water systems are good but they aren't as effective as truck-mount systems. Truck-mount systems are the Rolls Royce of carpet cleaners. Compared with portable hot water systems, truck-mount systems provide hotter water, higher pressure and stronger suction. So, all the way around, you get a much better job. No two ways about it.

### **THE IMPORTANCE OF VALUE AND PRICE**

When you select a carpet cleaner, you'll choose from a wide variety of cleaning methods and prices. Shaw Industries, the world's largest carpet manufacturer, recommends hot water extraction from a truck-mounted unit and a portable unit only in areas where the truck-mounted unit cannot reach.

#### **Here's why: A truck-mounted unit cleans much better than a portable unit for three reasons:**

It heats the water to a higher temperature. For every 18 degrees increase in temperature about 118 degrees, you double the water's cleaning ability. If the water temperature is 136 degrees, it will clean twice as effectively as water that is 118 degrees. Water at 154 degrees will clean four times better than water at 118 degrees, and so on until you reach a water temperature of 250 degrees.

A truck-mounted unit sprays the cleaning solution into your carpet at higher pressures which breaks up the dirt, bacteria, chemicals and pollens. 400 to 500 PSI is the optimum pressure for truck-mount hot water extraction.

The machine uses stronger suction to draw the dirt, chemicals, bacteria, pollen and tobacco smoke residue out of your carpet and into the waste tank of the outdoors truck to take away all the soil, debris, and contaminants. Users of portable extractors must dump all this trash, dirt, soil, and contaminants into your home's drainage system!

Not surprisingly, having your carpet thoroughly cleaned with truck-mount hot water extraction sometimes costs more than renting a shampoo machine at the corner grocery store.

If you bought the cheapest carpeting could find, then renting a small shampooer might be all you need. No question, it will get out the dirt - but the key word here is 'some'. It will not get out many of the pollens, chemicals, bacteria and dust mite residue, nor will it even come close to the high heat and vacuum pressure as a truck mounted machine.

On the other hand - if you want your carpet to look good and give you years of dependable service- then you need to have it cleaned by a skilled, qualified technician at least six months to a year depending on the amount of soiling and foot traffic it receives. You need to have it cleaned thoroughly and disinfected ... as only a truck-mount hot water extractor can.

"You get what you pay for." (Compare the costs: A typical rental of a small, inefficient portable rental from your local store can run you nearly as much as a mid-priced professional cleaner. Machine rental, plus chemicals, plus expenses and time to pick-up and return the rental machine, your hot water heating costs, not to mention your time and labor lugging the machine, filling and dumping waste water can add up. It is not unusual for you to spend \$80 for an inefficient rental machine!)

### **DO YOU WANT A CLEAN, HEALTHY CARPET?**

Which is more important to you: a clean carpet - or a clean and healthy carpet? Yes, I assure you ... there is a big difference.

There are advantages and disadvantages with each carpet cleaning method. Some methods will get out only the dirt. Other methods will get out dirt and grease. Still others will get out virtually everything. To be sure, some are more expensive than others.

If all you want is a cheap, rinse-the-dirt-off-the-top cleaning, which you can get for about \$9.95 per room, then we respectfully ask you to contact another company.

But if you want to protect your health - if you want to protect your investment in carpeting - if you want to protect your family from the countless bacteria, fungus, pollens and dust mite that reside in your carpet, then you're invited to call Professional Carpet Care.

The truck-mounted hot water unit, which we use, is the most effective cleaning system available today. Likewise, it's one of the most expensive units on the market. I bring this up for a very good reason. More and more families want the good health benefits that come from a fresh, clean carpet.

Have you ever seen how dirty a little boy's pants get when he plays outdoors? If you have, then you know you can brush off his pants and make him think they're clean. Or, if you want the job done right, you can machine wash them in hot water and detergent and you'll KNOW they're clean.

The same is true for your carpet. You can hire someone for \$25 to \$50 who will "brush off" your carpeting and make you think it's clean. Or, if you want the job done right, We'll wash your carpets with hot water and detergent using our state-of-the-art cleaning machine and you'll KNOW they're clean.

So if you want a thoroughly clean carpet - if you're willing to invest in your family's good health, you're invited to call us. You'll receive a written estimate, at no cost or obligation. Then when you give us the go ahead, you're further protected with our written quote.

## **STEPS TO A FRESH, CLEAN, HEALTHY CARPET**

If you're thinking about having your carpets cleaned, we encourage you to follow these four steps:

### **STEP #1**

#### ***Make a commitment to get your carpets cleaned.***

The longer they remain dirty, the sooner they'll wear out. Plus the longer you have to breathe all the pollens, fungus and chemicals that hide in your carpet.

### **STEP #2**

#### ***List your objectives.***

Do you want to only the dirt removed; something you could do with a rented shampooer? Or would you rather have all the bacteria, fungus, chemicals and dust mites removed which will requires hot water truck-mount cleaner, as we do? Do you want to work with an honest, reputable company? Or are you willing to risk working with the company that offers you the lowest price - knowing that the company might not be in business tomorrow?

### **STEP #3**

#### ***Ask questions.***

The way you learn about a company is to ask specific questions and listen carefully to the answers.

Here are six tough questions to ask a carpet cleaner before he begins to clean your carpet:

What method of carpet cleaning do you recommend?

What type of equipment do you use to clean carpet?

What will your equipment remove from my carpet?

How often should I get my carpets cleaned?

What training have you had in cleaning carpets?

Are you certified by the IICRC and will you show me your certification certificates?

### **STEP #4**

#### ***Get a specific quotation in writing.***

Once you're satisfied that you're working with an honest, competent professional, invite him into your home and ask for a specific quotation in writing. A written quotation gives you the assurance that you know exactly what your job will cost-no surprises.

By following these four steps, you'll gain all the information you need to make an informed, intelligent decision. If you want a quick, cheap carpet cleaning job, many companies in the phonebook can help you. Or you can rent a shampooer from the grocery store and do the job yourself.

However, if you want your carpeting to be completely and healthfully cleaned, removing the bacteria, fungus, chemicals, pollens and stains, then we invite you to call us.

We'll be happy to answer your questions, provide you a cost estimate over the telephone, and come to your home and give you a free written quotation before the job is done. To reach us, call (615) 228-7771.

Thank You for reviewing our new CONSUMER'S GUIDE TO CARPET CLEANING. We hope you found this information helpful.