

# Consumer's Inside Guide to Carpet Cleaning

## Dear Friend and Neighbor:

The carpet cleaning industry is one of the few industries that is not regulated, and also has a very low barrier to entry in that anyone can call themselves a “professional” without any basis for that claim. Yet these are people who come into your home and use cleaning chemicals which can be dangerous if you do not have the knowledge of how to use them properly, and more importantly do not have the right equipment (not a rented shampooer) to remove them properly.

Everyone has heard nightmare stories about crimes committed, about overuse or improper use of chemicals, and exposés on Bait-and-Switch companies who use a low coupon offers to get their foot in the door and hard sell unsuspecting consumers into a bill they are compelled to pay. When you open the phone book you really can't tell who the great cleaners are, or the ones you would never EVER want to use. The “great” cleaners work hard to distinguish themselves apart from the fly-by-night companies who use unsafe cleaning practices, hard-sell tactics, and sometimes have very unsavory employees.

Your carpet and rugs act as a “filter” in your home for your indoor air. Their fibers “grab” particulates and contaminants and hold them. But like any filter, it needs to be cleaned because when it gets full it cannot grab anything else ... and every time you step on a “full” filter you release contaminants back into the air.

Cleaning your carpet is key to a healthy indoor environment, and the EPA's guidelines for cleaning vary from every four months to every eighteen depending on the number of people and pets in the home, as well as other concerns from allergic sensitivities to how dusty the air is in your neighborhood to whether anyone in the home smokes. A true carpet cleaning professional can evaluate your particular needs, and with the right equipment and cleaning solutions, can fulfill those needs for you and your family.

The question now is how to find that “right” professional ... and we have the information to help you do just that.

The following is a summary on how to choose the right professional carpet cleaner. It covers some of the common mistakes made by consumers in choosing a carpet cleaner, and also the four steps you can take to help you in choosing a true “professional.”

We hope you find the information valuable, and if you have any questions please email us at [cletus57401@yahoo.com](mailto:cletus57401@yahoo.com) or call us direct at 605-226-0442.

## **5 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 – employees who are skilled at operating that equipment. Many companies own hot-water extractors, but few companies teach their employees how to use them properly. The best way to know that the carpet cleaner’s employees have been properly trained is to make sure the cleaner has been certified by the Institute of Inspection, Cleaning and Restoration Certification (IICRC) or by the Association of Specialists in Cleaning and Restoration (ASCR). Before you choose a carpet cleaner, ask to see written proof of their 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. But 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 (perhaps even a unit they rented from their local grocery store), which cannot match the cleaning performance of the superior machines designed to remove the most soil and contaminants, and leave the least residue behind.

**MISTAKE #3:** Choosing a carpet cleaner based on a single telephone call.

Instead, invite the person to your home and ask for a specific written quotation. Then you’ll know exactly what the carpet cleaner recommends – and you won’t be the victim of high-pressure tactics when the technician steps into your living room. This also allows the carpet cleaner to see the type of carpet, the level of soil, and measure the exact square footage so he is able to give you a more accurate quotation.

**MISTAKE #4:** Choosing a carpet cleaner who doesn’t offer a money-back guarantee.

Every carpet cleaning company should be fully accountable for its work. And if you aren’t pleased with the job in every way, you shouldn’t have to pay for it. Period.

**MISTAKE #5:** Choosing a carpet cleaner without getting comments from his other clients.

Any carpet cleaner can say anything about his past jobs. And, sadly, some of what he says may not be true. Make sure you ask for references or read comments from current customers so you can depend on the carpet cleaner and his work.

We hope you find the information valuable, and if you have any questions please email us at [cletus57401@yahoo.com](mailto:cletus57401@yahoo.com) or call us direct at 605-226-0442.

.Sincerely,

Cletus Thomas

Your carpet cleaning expert

## **4 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 yourself to get your carpets cleaned.

The longer they remain dirty, the sooner they'll wear out. Industry testing shows that you can have up to one full pound of dirt in a square foot of carpet before it begins to look dirty. This dirt is abrasive and wears down the fibers and substantially shortens the life. Many warranties require at least an annual cleaning by a professional to be honored (check your own warranty to see your requirements, and if they specify the type of cleaning method to keep your warranty in effect).

Another necessity of regular cleaning is to remove the contaminants besides the "dirt" that gets trapped in your carpet's fibers. The longer you wait to clean, the longer you have to breathe all the pollen, fungus, pet odors, dust mites, and chemicals that hide in your carpet.

**STEP #2:** List your objectives.

Is the health of your indoor environment highest on your list, so that you would want a company that is using the proper equipment and method to address your concerns? Do you want only the dirt removed – something you could do with a rented shampooer – or are you concerned about removing other contaminants (bacteria, pollen, dust mites, mold spores)? 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 and might not be safe to let into your home?

**STEP #3:** Ask questions.

The way you learn about a company is to ask specific questions and listen carefully to the answers. Here are nine questions to ask a carpet cleaner to help you feel more confident about the one that you choose:

- 1) What method of carpet cleaning do you recommend for my needs?
- 2) What type of equipment do you use to clean carpet, and what are your cleaning steps?
- 3) How often should I get my carpets cleaned?
- 4) What training have you had in cleaning carpets?
- 5) Are you a member of a Trade Association or other professional organization?
- 6) Are you and your technicians certified by the IICRC or ASCR, and can I see your certification certificates?
- 7) Do you guarantee your work?
- 8) Are you insured?
- 9) Do you have any references of clients or businesses who I can call regarding your work?

**STEP #4:** Once you're satisfied that you're working with an honest, competent professional, invite him to 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.

The purpose behind these steps is to empower you with the information you need to make a wise decision in choosing a carpet cleaning professional. The proper care of the carpet in your home (and all coverings in your home for that matter) is essential to creating a healthy indoor environment for you and your family, and this decision should never be taken lightly. These guidelines will help you to locate an ethical and excellent carpet cleaner in your town.