

COMING CLEAN (20)

There seems to be confusion and mis-information on different cleaning systems that are used. Some cleaning systems have merit while others do not. The following is an explanation of the various cleaning systems that are used to clean your clothes.

PROFESSIONAL DRYCLEANING

This is a process where clothes are placed in a drycleaning machine containing drycleaning solvents. Drycleaning solvent is referred to as a dry liquid because it does not contain water. The drycleaning solvent and the detergents used with it have the ability to remove dirt, soil, grease, oil and fatty acids from clothes. It has the advantage over washing clothes and using water in that it does not cause fabrics to shrink, bleed or lose color. The routine drycleaning process will remove approximately 1 and ½ pounds of soil impurities from every 100 pounds of clothes cleaned. This shows the effectiveness of the professional drycleaning process. Drycleaning solvent will also sterilize a garment due to its ability to destroy germs and bacteria. A very intricate filtering and distillation system purifies the solvent so it can constantly be used from load to load.

HOME DRYCLEANING KITS

This is a kit that is sold in supermarkets that is not solvent based. This kit contains a stain removing agent and a scented cloth. After the stains are removed the clothes are tumbled in a plastic bag with this scented cloth. Many odors in the garment are camouflaged giving the fabric a fresh scent. Dirt and soil however are not removed and sometimes rings from the scented cloth or stain removal process will occur. These rings can be removed if the garment is washed or drycleaned. The home drycleaning kit is advocated to possibly reduce drycleaning times. It does not replace professional drycleaning.

WETCLEANING

The technology of using water has made great advancement in the last ten years. Wetcleaning is a professional way of cleaning garments and is completely different from home washing. Drycleaners can wetclean more garments safely than ever before. They even wetclean suedes and leathers. This is due to the advancement of detergents, sophisticated wetcleaning equipment and tensioning finishing equipment. There is no such thing as 100% safe wetcleaning to all fabrics. There are some fabrics that cannot be wetcleaned or contact water at all. Wetcleaning therefore cannot replace drycleaning.

ULTRA-SONIC CLEANING

Ultra-sonic cleaning works by ultra-sonic waves (pressure waves) directed at a fabric. This system is used to clean window shades, Venetian blinds and many delicate fabrics. I have used ultra-sonic spotting equipment which can be effective for some stain removal. This method of cleaning is not widely used.

OZONE CLEANING

The theory is that ozone (O₃) has the ability to disinfect, deodorize and bleach fabrics. When ozone is injected into the wetcleaning system it means that the cleaner can use less detergents and bleaching agents. I have used this system of cleaning and found satisfactory results. Ozone chambers are also used by some cleaners to remove smoke and other odors in fabrics. The garments are hung in an enclosed area for a specific time period while being exposed to ozone.