

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Dry Cleaning Operations

What types of businesses are considered a dry cleaning operation?

Dry cleaning operations are defined under the Sewer Rates and Regulations Bylaw (No. 1862-2009) as “any commercial, industrial, or institutional operation that carries out the cleaning of textile and apparel goods, rugs, furs, leathers and other similar articles using tetrachloroethylene”.

Are there any exemptions for the code of practice for dry cleaning operations?

Yes. If a dry cleaning business does not use tetrachloroethylene in their processes then the code of practice will not apply.

What are some alternative cleaning methods for dry cleaning operations?

Alternative methods to using tetrachloroethylene in dry cleaning include methods using carbon dioxide, wet cleaning, high flash point hydrocarbon, silicone-based solvent, propylene glycol ether, n-propyl bromide and ultrasonic cleaning. Additional information on these and other technologies can be obtained by contacting your trade association, vendor or suppliers.

What is a tetrachloroethylene-water separator and how does it work?

After the wash cycle, the tetrachloroethylene used in the cleaning process is removed and sent to a distillation unit comprised of a boiler and condenser. The condensed tetrachloroethylene is directed into the separator unit where water is separated from the solvent by the effects of gravity (tetrachloroethylene – the heavier liquid – will settle to the bottom of the separator and water – lighter liquid – will rise to the top of the separator). The tetrachloroethylene is then removed and reused in the cleaning process.

Who can businesses contact for information about the installation of tetrachloroethylene-water separators?

Contact the British Columbia Fabricare Association (www.bcfab.org) or the Canadian Cleaners and Launderers Allied Trades Association (www.cleancanada.ca) for a list of vendors.

Is there a preferred supplier/manufacturer for an tetrachloroethylene-water separator?

Given the array of models available and the demand, this is a personal decision and the marketplace and individual negotiations will determine best prices. Many different sizes are available depending on the application needed. We recommend you do your research and obtain multiple quotes before choosing the best treatment works for your business.



Will tetrachloroethylene-water separators be inspected by the City?

Yes. City staff, upon request, may inspect treatment works at any time during regular business hours.

What maintenance and record keeping is required by dry cleaning businesses?

Dry cleaning businesses are expected to operate and maintain tetrachloroethylene-water separators or other treatment works according to the manufacturer's or supplier's instructions. Maintenance, disposal and recycling records must be kept for a minimum of two years and must be available for inspection by City staff upon request, at any time during the ordinary business hours of the business. Refer to the Code of Practice for Dry Cleaning Operations for more information about maintenance and record keeping.

Who do I contact if I have any further questions?

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