



Package Supply Corporation
Making the Move to Hydrocarbon

Dear Jan,

Thinking about going from Perc to Hydrocarbon? Here are a couple of considerations that need to be addressed according to Peter Blake of N.E.F.A. (North East Fabricare Association)



In light of the ever increasing scrutiny of perc, coupled with the very real potential of states looking at further regulation or even outright prohibitions, many cleaners are moving away from the solvent and beginning to use alternatives. The most prevalent alternative solvent has been high flashpoint hydrocarbons (petroleum based cleaning). Some cleaners who have been using petroleum cleaning for many years still use "Stoddard" Solvent which has a flashpoint of only 105, will have very different requirements. It is almost impossible today to get approval of opening a plant using this solvent. The ones using it currently are "grandfathered" in for the most part. This article is being written as a response to a very typical question in the NEFA Office: "I am switching to petroleum solvent, what kind of things will I need to do?"

It is a very big decision to switch solvents. Many cleaners wonder if they should make a change or not, or when the best time to do it is. There are a lot of factors to consider, and often times the decision must be made based on very unique, site specific information. NEFA is always here to help in researching what is right for each individual member. If you have questions concerning what makes sense for you, please call Peter Blake at the NEFA Office 1- 800-442-6848. The purpose of this article is not to help make the decision, but to highlight some of the concerns you need to think about during the conversion to using petroleum solvent. It is far from a simple switch out of one machine for another.

REGULATORY CHANGES

In many cases you will have to notify the EPA and the state air divisions that you are no longer using perc, and have switched solvents. You may also need to file for additional permits for using petroleum solvent. Petroleum is still a regulated solvent and is considered a Volatile Organic Compound (VOC). It does contribute to low-level ozone, and therefore must be regulated. To date most states have minimal regulations regarding hydrocarbons, but those are changing. You must notify the state that you are no longer a generator of Perc hazardous waste. This is not to say that you won't

be shipping out any waste, but it is of a different nature and content. NEFA STRONGLY URGES all cleaners to treat waste from hydrocarbon machines as hazardous and to still give it to a licensed hazardous waste hauler, but the manifests should reflect used waste oil rather than perc.

In some states the new permits and new regulations will involve different fees and different sets of regulations. You must check with your State and local offices to find out just what needs to be filed, and NEFA can help with that.

FIRE CODES

When making the switch from Perc to Hydrocarbon, you are moving from a solvent with NO flashpoint to one with a flashpoint in excess 140 degrees. This means that fire codes for the operations will be different. In some cases you will need to install automatic sprinkler systems, a nitrogen blanket, or other fire control equipment. When making the change you need to consult the local fire authority and building codes to see what if any changes you have to make. Most towns follow one of two fire codes. The most established code is NFPA 32, and the newer, more stringent is the International Fire Code. You can call your local fire department or planning office to see which standard would apply to you. For the rules regarding each, you can follow one of the two links listed below.

<http://www.nfpa.org/aboutthecodes/AboutTheCodes.asp?DocNum=32&cookie%5Ftest=1>

<http://aec.ihs.com/collections/abstracts/icc-ifc.htm>

INSURANCE ISSUES

When making any substantial change in your operation, you need to inform your insurance agent. There may be changes to your premium as well as your underwriting guidelines. While your insurance premium may be affected, you will still be able to get coverage assuming all other things are equal. The change in solvent doesn't make you a less desirable risk, they just need to be informed.

PRODUCTION

There is a learning curve to working with petroleum solvent. The necessary spotting is often different, as well as the maintenance on the machine. You need to make sure you are properly trained on the system and in preventing some of the problems that can be associated with hydrocarbon use. One of the most common issues is the possibility of bacteria growth in the solvent. IT comes from the moisture in the system from the cleaning of the clothes. You need to be meticulous in your care for the solvent. If you do have a bacteria growth there will be a strong odor left in the clothes, and the solvent will need to be treated. Proper training is a must.

Offer just keeps getting better as the years go by!!!!

Sincerely,

your sales team
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