FTC Care Labeling Rule Roundtable
March 28, 2014
Segment 2
Transcript

SPEAKER 1: Well, we will now hear from our second presenter, Charles Riggs, from Texas Woman's University.

CHARLES RIGGS: Good morning. Peter didn't mention, this is probably a continuation of the October 1 meeting on the sidewalk. There were about a dozen of us here. No one from FTC or the government of course, and we had some discussion, but--

SPEAKER 2: Sir, I apologize, I have to make one announcement. Somebody left a wedding ring

And we got involved in the wet cleaning process, actually, not too long after the Europeans began doing it. Wet cleaning is not new to the professional care industry. As far as I know it goes back to at least 1940. And probably before that.

Because you will look-- and so what I'll show you, demonstrate is, it was an essential part of the professional care industry. That is, you could not just use solvents, you also had to use water. Though wet cleaning was often practiced as a scrub-board type process as an adjunct to dry cleaning. In particular, for certain kinds of soils and fabric combinations. That's what I wanted to

machine. The back of it contains filtering processes for cleaning the solvent, and in most cases,

I want to talk about this issue of shrinkage, which we find more common in water. And there are actually two types of shrinkage we would deal with in textiles. One is relaxation shrinkage. And this comes from fabric that has been processed, usually wet. And in the processing, the fabric is stretched. It may, in fact, be in an elongated, stretched state when you buy a new garment.

Water is a very relaxing bath, and we tend to find that that fiber that was elongated now relaxes, and comes back to what would have been a normal length. With the customer very happy, they saw a change of one or two sizes in their garment. The warmer the water, the faster the relaxation. Once you get this relaxation shrinkage relaxed, back to original length, then it stops. And you would live with a stable fabric.(t)am2(n w)2v1(.)]T]TJ 0 4(b)-nless y [(s)-1(t)-2(r)3(e)4(1i)-2(c)4(n

So in terms of getting things cleaned, and what professional cleaners have known since 1940 and before, you need to match the chemistry to the soil. So if you're a drycleaner, you would have no problem with the nonpolar soils. You would have a problem with the polar soils. That is, match the two up. If the soil readily dissolves in water, it's a problem in dry cleaning. If it readily dissolves in solvent, it's a problem in washing.

So, give you a view ahead to the final statement, in our studies we have found that you actually need access to both technologies. If you want to get all wide range of soils out, you need some water chemistry when you're doing dry cleaning with solvents. If you're doing wet cleaning, you need some solvent chemistry when you're wet cleaning with water. And the professional cleaner would then rely upon their knowledge of soil type to do the appropriate thing for that particular type soil.

In wet cleaning we would find just the opposite. No problem with polar soils, our problem comes from the nonpolar soils. And we would have to add special detergents and multipliers and so on. And [INAUDIBLE], [INAUDIBLE] those oily soils which could become an environmental issue. If you are pre-spotting in wet cleaning with a solvent, and then you put that pre-spotted item into the wet cleaning machine, you have now added solvents to the water. Which is not allowed, or should not be allowed.

So again, you need a knowledge of soil type that's present to make a decision as to, should you use water on this, or should you use a solvent. Click through again. I must have built these slides wrong.

OK, so, I know in some of the news reports of this roundtable, where they talked about wet cleaning as being an environmentally friendly process, which I'll address later. But let's look at the environmental issues with dry cleaning. The process goes back to the 1800s.

Initial quality of the solvent was poor, but still, recycling was part of the standard practice. You would capture and reuse the solvent. But there was no method for disposing of dirty solvent or removed soils. So typically, this was done wherever you could dump it. And at that time, certainly was not illegal. And so we had a lot of contaminated sites that we're now cleaning up where that was dumped on the ground, or heaven forbid, got into the waterway. But, you know, some issues with now cleaning that up--

Now, the risk is certainly minimized with the modern machines and the modern technology. Problem water soluble soils removed by hand wet cleaning. Probably going back to, I can't document, but I would say back in the 1800s, probably. You would realize very quickly that some things coming in simply didn't come out with solvent, you needed to treat them with water either before or after the process. Had to be done that way.

I wanted to show you this one. We found in our studies comparing the three machines, the wet cleaning machine, the [INAUDIBLE] machine, and the hydrocarbon machine. And this was part of the international, inter-laboratory correlations. We used a IWS-- International Wool Secretariat-- test fabric.

And so here's the situation. You can take a wool fiber and talk about it as a fabric, a fiber, not a fabric. And you can elongate it. It will stretch. It doesn't recover very fast, and it doesn't recover completely. So wool in fabrics, quite often, is elongated.

If you increase the humidity, you would speed up that recovery process. In addition, the fiber has scales. I think you can see the cross-section down there that clearly shows the fiber, which are part of our issue with wool. When we expose wool to a combination of heat, moisture, and agitation, which is what you would need to get clean using water, these fibers will migrate or withdraw towards the rut end.

hand of the fabric, degrading the durability of the fabric, and then, the alkali found in most

Well, you could do some industrial laundry. And we work with that industry too. In fact, we do more with that industry than we do in dry cleaning. Industrial laundry is actually prepared to