



The WOOLSAFE Organisation – 10 years of service to the carpet and cleaning industries

The WOOLSAFE Organisation, as an independent testing and certification body, was 10 years old in October. The WOOLSAFE Mark is, of course, much older, 17 years to be precise.

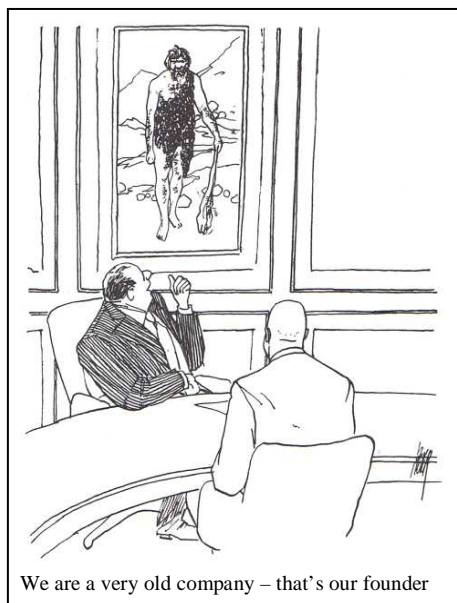
WOOLSAFE's activities have expanded greatly over the years. What started out as just a testing and certification programme for carpet maintenance chemicals has grown into a multi-faceted service encompassing also professional carpet cleaning and inspection represented in countries on four continents.

When the WOOLSAFE chemical testing programme was launched in 1991 eight chemical companies submitted products for evaluation and approval. Five of those companies, Chemspec, Host, SEBO, Vax and Whittaker are still WOOLSAFE Licensees and many of the approved products are still sold today. Testament that the best and safest products survive the longest and that the high standards set and the services provided remain of immense benefit to all concerned.

It is worth remembering that WOOLSAFE was the first, and for 13 years the only, organisation that pioneered independent testing and accreditation of cleaning products. It was also the first to link good cleaning practice to approved cleaning products by ensuring that selected, trained, long-established cleaning companies use approved products.

No other organisation anywhere in the world combines these two fundamental requirements.

WOOLSAFE continues to vigorously promote its aims, values, programmes, products, networks and services. It keeps expanding with new products, new companies and new services being added all the time.



We are a very old company – that's our founder

In between, it manages to carry out some interesting investigations, such as those into the rapid soiling and discolouration of carpets. And carry out surveys about the perceptions of carpet cleaning.

Finally, WOOLSAFE also remains involved with the development of national and international standards and codes of practice. We played an active part in the

development of the recently published PAS 86. (see page 2)

The WOOLSAFE Organisation - the carpet care people

One of our partners' view of WOOLSAFE



WOOLSAFE... Only The Best Need Apply

The WOOLSAFE Organization is THE source for certification of all maintenance products for wool carpets and floor coverings. This highly respected organization has grown from a single office in the United Kingdom to a worldwide presence with offices in Australia, the United State, Germany, Greece and Southern Africa.

WOOLSAFE Testing

Because products used on wool floor coverings must be both safe and effective, WOOLSAFE sometimes runs as many as a dozen different tests on each product they evaluate. All tests are based on industry-accepted standards. Once a product successfully passes the testing protocol, it then becomes eligible to display the prestigious WOOLSAFE certification Mark.



However, the testing program doesn't end with a simple pass or fail before the product is introduced. WOOLSAFE certification requires that products be re-evaluated every twelve months to assure continued compliance. No other testing program is more rigorous in this regard.

Our Partnership

Because Fibre-Seal specializes in caring for the very finest interior textiles, WOOLSAFE approval became an important goal for us. We wanted to assure the designers who recommend us – and their clients – that our products are safe and effective. When we learned about WOOLSAFE, we submitted two of our protective treatments immediately, and they became some of the first products authorized to use the WOOLSAFE Mark in 1992.

Since that time, we have submitted more products for approval as our family of branded products has grown, including protective treatments for fabrics and floor coverings, as well as various cleaning and maintenance chemicals.

Our commitment to WOOLSAFE

Why are we so committed to the WOOLSAFE program? Because we learn from it! The information we get from their testing protocol actually helps us fine-tune our products and make them even more effective. Their understanding and use of scientific methods enhances our entire industry.

Fiber-Seal has developed many specific formulas and techniques for protecting and cleaning a wide variety of fine fabrics, including wool, linen, silk, sisal and more... As fibers and warranties change, we continue to refine our products and services.

A number of Fiber-Seal Service Centers in the USA and Canada are also accredited as WOOLSAFE Certified Cleaning Technicians.

For more information: www.fiberseal.com.

How long are wool carpets protected against insect attack?

Enquiries received by the WOOLSAFE office regarding wool-eating insects damaging carpets and rugs seem to be on the rise. We always recommend that carpet owners have their floor coverings professionally treated rather than trying to deal with the problem themselves. Anyway, there are few, if any, treatments available to consumers these days – health and safety legislation has seen to that.

We received a call from a gentleman living in one of London's suburbs who had a bad infestation of carpet beetle. He contacted two pest control companies who were going to charge him around £2000! While an elderly couple living south of London was only charged £100 for treating all the carpets in their 4-room cottage. What's going on here?

Another enquirer with a moth damaged carpet was in dispute with the carpet's supplier. The carpet was sold as being "moth-proof". However, the carpet is now 6 years old and moths have attacked it in patches. His question was "is there a standard for the durability of manufacturer-applied insect resist treatments? In other words, what is a reasonable length of time for a treated carpet to remain resistant to wool-eating insect attack?"

We posed this question to both the Woolmark Company and Wools of New Zealand. Their response was unequivocal: a 6-year old carpet should be protected. Both the Woolmark and Fernmark schemes require new carpets produced by their licensees to have twice the level of insect resist treatment that is needed to provide protection. This allows for losses due to light degradation and (wet) cleaning. In practice, light degradation is rarely an issue as the larvae only attach wool at the base of the carpet pile where little light reaches and those parts of the carpet which are situated in dark, undisturbed areas. The aim of both certification schemes is to provide about 15 years of protection.

Dr Peter Ingham of Wool Research in New Zealand adds: "There have been a number of cases of beetle larvae showing resistance to permethrin (the chemical most often used in insect resist treatments) but clothes moth larvae (the most common species attacking wool) are generally well controlled. In our experience, most of the cases of insect attack by moth larvae are the result of no treatment or serious under-treatment.



Carpet beetle (*Anthrenus verbasci*)

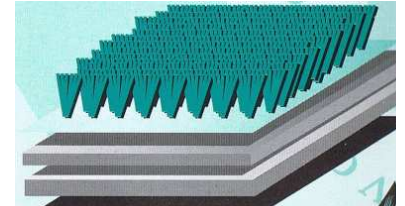
"The level of treatment is based on finding the minimum effective concentration (MEC) of the agent which will give protection against the most difficult species (as specified in a geographical area, e.g. NZ requires protection against more species than the UK or the USA). A carpet treated with around *twice* this MEC level is then subject to a light fastness test and then three hot water extraction cleanings. This determines the fastness factor and the amount of agent required to be on the new carpet is adjusted accordingly."

Good news for carpet cleaners

It's always nice that there is, amongst the gloom of a shrinking economy, a bit of good news for carpet cleaners.

One of the problems that faces carpet cleaners – well, those using 'wet' systems anyway – is that of the possibility of shrinkage. Even when moisture application has been within limits, natural fibre backings – those made with cotton and jute – have an occasional tendency to shrink a little, which can lead to split seams or detachment from the gripper. A detached secondary backing can also occur with tufteds.

Not with one manufacturer's backing! Brockway Carpets have developed Envirobac which will not delaminate when wet. The difference between this backing and those using latex is that Envirobac uses a combination of polyolefin derivatives, which are extremely stable.



The backing is also lighter, softer and more flexible – even when very cold – and crease-resistant.

Finally, the up-to-date production process has less impact on the environment due to lower energy use and much less effluent.

We have tested the backing for its stability to wetting – soaking really – and its dimensional stability. Even after several immersions in both water and a detergent solution, with drying in between, we can report that there was no sign of the backing delaminating or any change in the dimensions of the carpet.

For more information go to: www.brockway.co.uk

Code of Practice on carpet maintenance published in UK

PAS 86, the British Standards Institution's Code of Practice for the professional inspection and cleaning of textile floor coverings was published on 30 June 2008 and became available in September.

This Publicly Available Specification was developed by BSI and the NCCA with the active collaboration of a number of industry companies and organisations, including The WOOLSAFE Organisation, involved with or with an interest in carpet maintenance. A PAS is not a British Standard, but a Code of Practice and does "not purport to include all the provisions of a contract. Users are responsible for its correct application".

PAS 86 covers management responsibilities, customer service, carpet installation, pre-cleaning tests and surveys, soil prevention and other protective treatments, cleaning methods and cleaning chemicals, and health and safety issues. It also provides examples of survey and risk assessment forms.

For copies of PAS 86:2008 contact BSI (+44 (0)20 8996 9001, www.bsigroup.com) or the NCCA (+44 (0)116 271 9550, www.ncca.co.uk).

RPM **CHEMSPEC**

celebrates 40 years of excellence

American chemical manufacturer, **Chemspec** was founded in **1968 in Baltimore**, where the headquarters are still based. Chemspec was born on the premise that there was room in the marketplace for a company totally dedicated to the needs of the carpet and upholstery cleaning industry. The first customers were Professional Carpet Cleaners and contractors whose primary job was cleaning residential and commercial carpet.

On 1st September 1988, Chemspec became part of the RPM group of chemical manufacturing companies headquartered in Medina, Ohio. RPM International Inc. is a world leader in coatings and specialty chemicals, and their additional resources, expertise and direction made Chemspec an even stronger company financially and technically.

They have always been at the forefront of product development; and they were amongst the first companies to see the merits and benefits of the WoolSAFE programme and join it at its start in 1991. Today, with no less than fourteen approved products, they are one of the largest WOOLSAFE licensees.

RPM Chemspec is known and respected worldwide. It has earned and maintains a strong reputation for formulating and manufacturing high quality, innovative cleaning agents for carpet and upholstery maintenance, deodorization, smoke and fire restoration, oriental rug cleaning, stain removal and leather care.

Chemspec operates in Europe through its subsidiary, **Chemspec Europe, Ltd.** The West Yorkshire-based company is well known amongst professional carpet cleaners for providing a wide range of excellent chemicals as well as very comprehensive training and support.

They too recognise the importance of independent testing and certification, and were amongst the first companies to gain **Green WoolSAFE** accreditation for some of their products.



CONGRATULATIONS!

Three WoolSAFE licensees were amongst 40 companies and NGOs invited to an awards ceremony held in November in Washington, D.C. They were recognised by The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency under the Design for the Environment (DfE) Program's Safer Detergent Stewardship Initiative (SDSI) for their efforts to promote and use safer surfactants. The DfE Program has identified safer alternative surfactants through partnerships with industry and environmental advocates. These alternatives are readily available, comparable in cost, but break down quickly to non-polluting compounds and are safer for aquatic life.

Clean Control Corporation and **JohnsonDiversey Inc** were recognized as a **Champion**, the highest level of recognition offered under the SDSI.

Host/Racine Industries, Inc. was recognised as **Partner** for making significant contributions towards the use of safer surfactants.



Approved products update



Prochem Europe has had its **Natural Range** of carpet cleaners WoolSAFE approved.

The six chemicals cover the main types of carpet care products. They are all biodegradable and free of dyes, synthetic fragrances and EDTA, and contain only environmentally-safe ingredients. The Natural Range formulations conform to the USA EPA "Design for Environment" guidelines. They have a very pleasant natural lemongrass and herbal fragrance.

E157 Natural Carpet Rinse is a low pH extraction cleaner which is suitable to neutralise alkaline residues without the use of harsh or corrosive acids. **E772 Natural Carpet Cleaner** is a cleaning concentrate with encapsulation technology, it provides excellent cleaning even at low concentrations. **E779 Natural Carpet Powder Detergent** is a phosphate free carpet extraction detergent for commercial carpet cleaning. It is suitable for both portable and truck mount cleaning units with high heat stability and fast dissolving performance. **E728 Natural Carpet Foam Shampoo**

generates dense dry foam with polymer encapsulation for rotary shampoo, bonnet and dry foam carpet cleaning. **E717 Natural Carpet Prespray** enhances cleaning of heavily soiled areas. It is a clear, low volatile organic compound concentrate with encapsulation technology. **E343 Natural Carpet Spotter** is a neutral pH spot cleaner for removing a wide variety of spots and stains from carpet.



cleanerswarehouse.co.uk a fast growing cleaning chemical and equipment distributor based in Lancashire, England, has become the latest **WoolSAFE licensee**.

Cleaners Warehouse aims to be a one-stop supplier of industrial and residential carpet and upholstery cleaning equipment, chemicals and consumables. They have been selling Dry Fusion equipment as well as WoolSAFE approved chemicals from Dry Fusion, Research Products and Prochem Europe.

They have now launched, and gained WoolSAFE accreditation for, the **Pro-Shield** range, their own sanitising products with powerful cleaning performance. These products will kill bacteria and protect surfaces against MRSA, CDiff Ecoli and others, whilst cleaning safely and effectively.



Proshield Ultra Concentrate can be used on carpets and fabric, as well as a range of hard surfaces of wood, ceramic tile and metal. It is a WoolSAFE approved pre-cleaner at 1:20 dilution.

Proshield Ultra Trigger Spray is a ready-to-use spot cleaner and disinfectant, which is also available in the form of handy **disposable cloth wipes**.



WOOLSAFE training courses in 2009

Training courses for carpet cleaning companies or individuals who wish to learn more about wool carpet maintenance, or to become WOOLSAFE Certified Operators, will be held at different venues and dates in 2009.

IICRC certified technicians will earn one CEC credit on completion of the course.

Poole, Dorset

Date: 28 January 2009
Venue: TBA
Course tutor: Julie Roberts, *Chemspec Europe*
Contact: Chemspec Europe, 01274 597 333, julie@chemspec-europe.com

Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Tyne & Wear

Date: 25 February 2009
Venue: TBA
Course tutor: Julie Roberts, *Chemspec Europe*
Contact: Chemspec Europe, 01274 597 333, julie@chemspec-europe.com

Birmingham, West Midlands

Date: 12 March 2009
Venue: Near NEC, Birmingham
Course tutor: Paul Bakker & Dr Agnes Zsednai
Contact: The WOOLSAFE Organisation, T: 01943 850817, F: 01943 462 127, E: stella@woolsafe.org

Winter special:

Course fee [including handouts, course manual, examination papers, refreshments, (light) lunch] **only £99.00** per delegate.

New pdf versions of WOOLSAFE directories

Both the Directory of WOOLSAFE Certified Professional Carpet Cleaners and WOOLSAFE Registered Inspectors have been published in pdf format and will be distributed to our industry partners, clients, customers and contacts in the UK by email.

The carpet cleaners' directory has been made more user-friendly and more comprehensive. You can find a cleaner in a particular town, city or county simply by looking under the customer's or client's postcode. Each and every UK postcode is listed with one or more cleaning companies covering that postcode. Irish cleaners are listed by county and town or city.

Carpet care information, a comprehensive spot removal guide and a list of approved carpet care products for consumers has also been added to this directory.

The inspector's directory has been similarly converted to pdf with an easy-to-use way of finding the nearest inspector in a particular town or city.

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NEW GUIDELINES FOR AUSTRALIAN CARPET CLEANERS REGARDING WATER USAGE

WOOLSAFE Australia has been working with the National Upholstery and Carpet Cleaners Association (NUCCA) to help set up guidelines for the licensing of carpet cleaners under the Queensland Water Commission.

Areas of Australia have been in drought for a number of years. Dam levels have been down as low as 20% and to conserve water the Commission has set limits for daily household use and has worked with industries to help limit water use. Carpet cleaners are the latest industry to be targeted.

While they acknowledge that for hygiene reasons, no limits will be placed on the actual cleaning of carpets and upholstery, they expect operators to be more responsible. The licence will apply across the south East Queensland region and possibly then be taken up by other regional authorities. WOOLSAFE Australia and NUCCA see this as a positive step for the industry. WOOLSAFE would also like to see this extended into environmentally responsible use of detergent and even waste disposal as part of an overall licence scheme for carpet cleaners.

Australia already has a government-recognised qualification for carpet cleaners. Apart from teaching best practice, it also includes training in water-wise cleaning and responsible disposal of waste. The Qualification also extends to Workplace Health and Safety and customer service. To be issued with a qualification requires a process undertaken through a Registered Training Organisation. Assessment of competence is not just by a simple exam. Candidates must be able to demonstrate competence against a set of Competency standards.

WOOLSAFE Australia, through its Australian Director Colin Nation, plays an active part in the formulation of the competency standards for this government recognised, trade level qualification called the Certificate III in Asset Maintenance - Carpet Cleaning Operations.

NEW WOOLSAFE Certified Operators in Australia

We are delighted to welcome a number of additional professional carpet & upholstery cleaning companies who have joined the WOOLSAFE Certified Operators Network in Australia in the last six months. They are:

Ben McHenry, **McHenry's Carpet Cleaning** of Ballarat, Victoria.

Brendan's Carpet Cleaning and Pest Control, Norman Gardens, Rockhampton, Queensland..

Shorty Glanville, **Get Shorty Carpet & Upholstery Care**, Edge Hill, Cairns, North Queensland.

For more news from WOOLSAFE Australia visit their new website: www.woolsafe.com.au



We wish you all a
**happy Festive Season and
 a prosperous New Year**