

Defining Green Dry Cleaning

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If you're like most people, when you see a sign in your dry cleaner's window that says: "**green**," "**eco-friendly**," "**organic**" you probably assume those words mean something positive. But do you know what it *really* means? This week, [Green Inside and Out](#) and [Prevention is the Cure](#) issued a [green paper](#) and [video](#) to explain the options and empower consumers to make good choices.

Perchloroethylene, or **Perc**, is a petrochemical solvent that is the most common used by dry cleaners, but several federal agencies have categorized Perc as a likely human carcinogen. The EPA requires that by the year 2020, all perc machines operating within residential buildings must be removed.

Fortunately, there are several alternatives to Perc available today:

- **Wet cleaning:** they wet your clothes and wash them with a commercial grade detergent in a specialized machine. This method is generally considered the greenest of all the options.
- **Liquid CO2:** Pressurized CO2 in a specialized machine; sometimes may also use some detergent as well.
- **Greenearth, or liquid siloxane:** Degrades into silica and has no human health effects associated with it though studies found lab animals developed tumors if exposed to very high concentrations of it.
- **Rynex:** Propylene glycol ether or type of cleaner that is also used in some body products. It can be an eye and skin irritant and is considered a VOC (volatile organic compound) but has not been shown to cause cancer.
- **Hydrocarbon:** Less toxic than Perc. However, contains set of petrochemical based solvents. Studies have found them to be eye and skin irritants and to cause headaches and dizziness at high doses. It is not yet determined whether or not hydrocarbons can cause cancer. Typically of a dry cleaner is using hydrocarbon they advertise as "organic." Do not be confused by this—the word organic in this context is referring to the chemistry of the substance being carbon based, not that the cleaner is chemical-free.

What consumers can do:

- Seek out a dry cleaner using the safest available alternative to Perc.
- If you use a dry cleaner that uses Perc, before you bring the bag of clothes inside your home, take the **plastic bag** off and let them off-gas into the outside air.
- **Recycle** those plastic bags that come with your clothes. They are made of plastic #4, which can be recycled with your grocery bags at your local grocery store.
- Better yet, avoid the use of those plastic bags altogether by using reusable dry cleaning garment bags such as those made by [Green Garmento](#).



Learn more on how to avoid exposure to dry cleaning chemicals, and protect your health and the environment, at [GreenInsideandOut.com](#).

Long Island Green Dry Cleaner List

An unpublished 2011 mail survey of over 800 LI dry cleaners conducted by Sustainability Institute at Molloy College in Farmingdale, NY yielded 14 replies by mail from companies identifying themselves as green/eco-friendly.¹ In addition to those mailed survey results, dry cleaners were called directly by phone based on advertisements in the yellow pages & local green directory listings. A search of local companies on www.nodryclean.com was also conducted. From all of this, the following list of 27 Long Island dry cleaners was compiled that identify themselves as “green,” “non-toxic,” “organic,” or other similar wording. Consumers should make the best choices based on the information provided above.

Dry Cleaners on Long Island Using Methods Alternative to PercNassau

1. Adelphi Dry Cleaners, Garden City So., 516-486-2442 — Hydrocarbon
2. American Cleaners, Hicksville, 516-931-9396 — Hydrocarbon
3. Andrew Howard Cleaners, Syosset, 516-496-7962 — Hydrocarbon (spray method, uses less solvent); wet-cleaning
4. Arthur Copeland Cleaners, Cedarhurst, 516-295-2198 — CO₂, wet-cleaning
5. Blue Ribbon Cleaners, East Norwich, 516-922-5050 — Hydrocarbon
6. Connie French Cleaners & Tailors, Great Neck, 516-487-1599 — Hydrocarbon
7. Corniche Cleaners, Oyster Bay, 516-624-3804 — Wet-cleaning
8. Country Cleaners, Port Washington, 516-883-9571 — Hydrocarbon
9. Deb’s Cleaners, Jericho, 516-681-2878 — Greenerth
10. Fiesta Cleaners, Massapequa Park, 516-541-2140 — Hydrocarbon
11. Go Green (Four Ws) Environmental Dry Cleaning, Long Beach, Rockville Centre, & Garden City, 516-431-6461 — Greenerth
12. Greensleeves Garment Care, Oyster Bay, 516-624-2020 — Greenerth; wet-cleaning
13. Holiday Park Cleaners, Farmingdale, 631-694-6954 — Hydrocarbon
14. Meurice Garment Care, Manhasset, 516-627-6060 — Hydrocarbon; wet-cleaning
15. Middle Neck Organic, Great Neck, 516-482-1454 — Hydrocarbon
16. Pamper Cleaners, Hicksville, Plainview & Syosset, 516-681-5040 — Hydrocarbon; wet-cleaning
17. Sterling French Dry Cleaner, Port Washington, 516-767-0003 — Hydrocarbon; wet-cleaning
18. Woodhill Cleaners Inc., Woodmere, 516-374-1103 — Hydrocarbon

Suffolk

19. All Fabric Cleaners, Farmingville, 631-736-1781 — Wet-cleaning, *Participated in NYSP2I wet-cleaning demonstration in 2012*
20. Deb’s At Huntington Cleaners, Huntington Station, 631-424-5583 — Greenerth
21. Evergreen Cleaners, Huntington, 631-923-0034 — Hydrocarbon; wet-cleaning
22. Fort Hill Cleaners, Huntington, 631-351-2966 — Hydrocarbon; wet-cleaning
23. Gentle Care Cleaners, Bayport, 631-363-2008 — Hydrocarbon; wet-cleaning
24. Good Ground Dry Cleaners, Hampton Bays, 631-728-2288 — Hydrocarbon; wet-cleaning; “dry-to-dry” machines
25. Greenlawn ECOcleaners, Greenlawn, 631-754-2766 — Hydrocarbon
26. New Best Cleaners, Nesconset, 631-382-9494 — Hydrocarbon
27. Northport Cleaners, Northport, 631-261-6777 — Hydrocarbon
28. Rainbow Cleaners, Huntington Village, 631-351-5820 — Hydrocarbon; wet-cleaning
29. Sunny Hi-Tech Cleaners, Shirley, 631-281-1666 — Wet-cleaning
30. Swan Cleaners, Amityville, 631-691-1820 — Hydrocarbon; wet-cleaning
31. Sweetwater’s French Style Dry Cleaners, Wainscott, 631-537-5120 — Hydrocarbon; wet-cleaning
32. The Cleanery, East Farmingdale, 631-847-3930—Greenerth; wet-cleaning (*Specializes in wedding gowns/leather*)

¹ Note: Difficulties with surveying dry cleaners is that not everyone answers the written survey, and also English may not be the primary language for some dry cleaning business owners.

**Green Inside and Out
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*Take a moment to get to know as much as you can about the risks and benefits of different dry cleaning methods.
Together as informed consumers, we can move the marketplace to offer us a greater number of healthier choices.*