



# 2012 Clean Air Award

## Beacon Cleaners and Laundry

The environmental efforts of Beacon Cleaners & Laundry started in 1998 when its owner, Mr. Hi Bum Kim, became the first dry cleaning operator in Washington to use DF-2000 solvent. The solvent is synthetically produced aliphatic hydrocarbon that can be used as an alternative to traditional dry cleaning solvents, such as perchloroethylene or “perc.”

Dry cleaners that use perc must meet stringent air quality and hazardous waste regulations because of the environmental and public health concerns associated with the solvent.

Perc is a hazardous air pollutant and a known carcinogen. Exposure can cause dizziness, irritation to eye and respiratory system. Chronic exposure has been linked to damage to the central nervous system.

To use the new DF-2000 solvent, Beacon installed two new Firbimatic dry-to-dry closed loop machines. With these state-of-the-art machines, Beacon significantly reduced typical solvent usage to clean almost 1,000 loads of clothing with less than 3 gallons of DF-2000, due to the highly efficient solvent recovery systems. Since the solvent is not considered a dangerous waste, additional savings are realized.

Other benefits of using this solvent

over perc are that it cleans better, is gentler on fabrics, clothes come out softer with less fading and are virtually odor free, and there is no need for chemical spot removers or deodorants typically used with perc dry cleaning operations.



Hi Bum Kim, Owner of Beacon Cleaners, recognized for his commitment to reduce emissions by investing in new technology.

The initial cost of the new Firbimatic machines run 2-3 times more than traditional dry cleaning machines.

According to Mr. Kim, the machines have paid for themselves with lower waste disposal and solvent costs. But it was his concern for the environment and his employees that encouraged him to make the investment.

"I decided to install the DF-2000 machines because I care about our employees and I care about our environment," stated Mr. Kim.

Over the past decade, dry cleaning machine technology has improved. In 2010 Beacon Cleaners installed newer technology DF-2000 solvent machines. These Ipura Hybrid Class machines by Columbia/ILSA are a non-venting system.

The machines have increased Beacon's cleaning efficiency, reducing the amount of solvent used by 90%. Investing in these new machines has eliminated air emissions previously associated with dry cleaning. As a result, Beacon Cleaners is no longer considered an air pollution source and therefore is not required to register with Spokane Clean Air or pay annual registration fees or be subject to annual compliance inspections.

Last summer, Beacon became the first EnviroStars certified dry cleaner in Spokane County – serving as an environmental leader for the local dry cleaning industry. To further reduce their impact on the environment, Beacon offers reusable garment bags to their customers.

Congratulations to Beacon Cleaners and Laundry for receiving the 2012 Clean Air Award! ■