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DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION ANNOUNCES DRY CLEANERS TO BETTER INFORM CONSUMERS BY DISCLOSING CHEMICALS USED

The New York City Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) today announced that dry cleaners will be required to post the primary chemicals used in the dry cleaning process so that consumers can access the information about their potential impact. About 1,400 dry cleaning businesses throughout New York City will be required to list the chemicals and a link to information about their health effects beginning in February, 2014. Over the next year, DEP will work with businesses to begin to implement the new rule ahead of the enforcement date. A template of the disclosure form is available at nyc.gov/dep.

“The local dry cleaner is an essential part of life for most New Yorkers and it is important that information about all the chemicals used by these businesses is available,” said DEP Commissioner Carter Strickland. “At virtually no cost to businesses this rule will ensure that this important public health information is available to the public.”

"The National Cleaners Association (NCA) was pleased to work co-operatively with DEP to develop a strategy for educating consumers about the new cleaning solutions being used in the dry cleaning industry, and we applaud DEP's investment in developing a consumer friendly website to answer that challenge," said Nora Nealis NCA's Executive Director.

Most dry cleaners use perchloroethylene or “perc,” which is regulated by Federal, State, and City governments as exposure to perc vapor can have negative health effects. Dry cleaners that use perc are required to post an informational sign which provides contact information to report odors and other problems. The notice also lists where additional information can be found about the potential health effects of perc exposure. Some dry cleaners have more recently promoted the use of non-perc chemicals but these cleaning agents may also have health risks. DEP’s new rule will help inform consumers about the use of non-perc chemicals and any potential effects.

DEP developed the new disclosure rule in close consultation with the National Cleaners Association and other industry groups. The cost of compliance is minimal or non-existent; dry cleaners simply have to fill out and print the applicable forms from the DEP website and post in their business.

- The draft form for perc dry cleaners is available at:
www.nyc.gov/html/dep/pdf/air/nyc-perc-posting-notice.pdf
- The draft form for non-perc dry cleaners is available at:
nyc.gov/html/dep/pdf/air/non-perc-posting.pdf

DEP manages New York City's water supply, providing more than one billion gallons of water each day to more than nine million residents, including eight million in New York City. The water is delivered from a watershed that extends more than 125 miles from the city, comprising 19 reservoirs and three controlled lakes. Approximately 7,000 miles of water mains, tunnels and aqueducts bring water to homes and businesses throughout the five boroughs, and 7,500 miles of sewer lines and 96 pump stations take wastewater to 14 in-city treatment plants. DEP has nearly 6,000 employees, including almost 1,000 in the upstate watershed. In addition, DEP has a robust capital program, with a planned \$14.4 billion in investments over the next 10 years that creates up to 3,000 construction-related jobs per year. For more information, visit www.nyc.gov/dep, like us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/nycwater, or follow us on Twitter at www.twitter.com/nycwater.

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