

## **EMAP Recognizes Need for Additional Help with the Drycleaner Community**

In yet another example of how our services are helping businesses across Pennsylvania, EMAP has been working closely with a particular group of businesspeople, helping them comply with the environmental regulations which allow them to stay in business, while helping keep the environment safe and clean.

There are an estimated 1200 drycleaners across the state of Pennsylvania, the majority of which are run by Korean business owners, but all of which are subject to various levels of environmental regulation, depending on their operations. In recognition of the specific challenges faced this group, Bill Dunagan, one of EMAP's Environmental Consultants who specializes in Air Quality issues, has been focusing on providing this community with the extra help it needs.

Federal and state air compliance regulations can be confusing, even for those who work closely with them. For small business owners, it can be downright daunting, figuring out which rules apply and how to manage their businesses according to the standards. But even if a business is exempt from a regulation, for example, it can be a struggle to manage the associated paperwork correctly.

Add to that a language barrier, and you can understand why certain small business owners rely heavily on the assistance provided by the air quality experts at the Environmental Management Assistance Program (EMAP). As part of EMAP's services, consultants provide confidential and free environmental assistance to Pennsylvania small business owners with a broad range of environmental compliance issues and two of our consultants are dedicated exclusively to air regulations.

"Drycleaners, like everyone else, they want to stay in compliance while running a successful business that integrates safely into their neighborhoods," says Dunagan. "They just don't know where to turn for help."

Dunagan has been working with EMAP clients since 2008, after a long tenure at the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (PA DEP) as an Air Quality Inspector. He periodically receives calls from drycleaners, and often helps them figure out if they are subject to certain regulations and how to appropriately obtain mandatory permits. After attending the PDCA Conference in the fall of 2008, he started to notice that many of the questions being posed were related to basic recordkeeping requirements. "Recordkeeping" may sound simple enough, but it's very precise and oversights or mistakes will lead to fines by the regulating agency, the PA DEP. A language barrier can make such precision difficult to follow correctly.

Around the same time, a local initiative started to gain momentum that would have accelerated federal legislation and pushed a ban of PERC, a common dry cleaning chemical, up by several years in Philadelphia County.

This issue brought the dry cleaning community together, under the leadership of a few key people in the industry including Dale Kaplan, Vice Chair of the Small Business Compliance Advisory Committee and owner of Careful Cleaners in Camp Hill, Pa, Jason Kim, president of the Philadelphia Korean Dry Cleaning Association and Carol Memburg President of the PDCA. While the initiative continued to be reviewed, Kaplan, Dunagan and Kim discussed many other factors facing this group of small business owners, and realized that, by taking a little extra time and resources, they could work together on a few simple projects that would make things dramatically better for this community.

Kaplan initially suggested a free informational seminar for the dry cleaning community as a whole but targeted to a Korean audience, to review general information about the regulations, associated requirements and other important “need-to-know” dates and facts. The speakers would also provide information on the resources available to the drycleaners, including the free and confidential consulting service through EMAP. Dunagan was the keynote speaker and Jason Kim interpreted.

Once the Philadelphia-based seminar was scheduled, the team arranged for a press conference with relevant Korean and dry cleaning publications to help spread the word. After the informational seminar there was a significant uptick in calls to Dunagan.

“This is a very tight-knit group”, says Dunagan. “And they’re conservative about business relationships unless they’re with people they know and trust. By getting them familiar not only with our service but with a specific face and name, we hope to encourage them to talk with us.”

A second press conference was held after the informational seminar to summarize the information and reinforce the resources available through EMAP.

From there, Dunagan worked diligently with the Jane Greber (PA DEP), Mr. Hong (The Korean Daily News) and Jason Kim to have five instructional pages of the Pennsylvania drycleaner calendar translated completely into Korean. The calendar, provided as a resource by the PA DEP, provides important guidelines and critical deadlines to the dry cleaning community. Translating this basic but critical information effectively removed a major compliance obstacle for this community – now, with the ability to understand what’s expected, these Korean business owners are more on par with all other drycleaners in the state. They’re less likely to be fined or even shut down for non-compliance, and they’re more likely to recognize and report issues.

To date, Dunagan has helped dozens of dry cleaners across Pennsylvania but thinks these additional resources will actually increase the number of calls and questions he fields from drycleaners. “By reading and comprehending the information, they will actually be able to realize when they have additional questions”, he says. “We have already seen a big jump in calls.”

Dunagan and his colleagues will continue to go above and beyond in their efforts to help supply the information and resources this community needs to succeed and thrive. PA DEP will be sending out a mass mailing to Dry Cleaners across the state very soon but in the meantime the following link will take you PA DEP’s website where anyone can download the 2010 Dry Cleaner Compliance Calendar (including the translated version) for free (<http://www.elibrary.dep.state.pa.us/dsweb/View/Collection-7981>).