



**Alliance for a Healthy
Tomorrow**



An Act Requiring Disclosure of Solvents used in Dry Cleaning

MA Legislation

H.2478 (Representative Frank Smizik) Joint Committee on Public Health

Background:

Over 80% of U.S. dry cleaners use the cleaning agent perchloroethylene, or perc. Perc has been linked to cancer, nervous system problems, liver and kidney damage, immune system problems, and other negative health impacts. Unfortunately, many of the alternatives to perc that are currently in use, including some that are marketed as “green” or “eco-friendly”, have also been linked to health and environmental damage. Some garment cleaning businesses in Massachusetts have shifted to the safest method of cleaning called professional wet cleaning. Wet cleaning is a water-based process that uses biodegradable solvents and has no known negative environmental or health effects. This bill will help customers to consider health and safety concerns in their choice of garment cleaner.



The Disclosure of Dry Cleaning Solvents Bill will:

This bill will require garment cleaners using a dry cleaning solvent system to post in their stores what chemical(s) they are using in their processes, along with a color coded indicator of the hazard level of each chemical for full disclosure to their customers, neighbors, and employees. The posting will permit consumers to gain information about the potential risks associated with the use of each chemical. Additional detailed information about each of the hazardous chemical substances used at the dry cleaning facilities will be posted on the website of the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection. Access to information about toxic chemicals will help consumers protect their health and that of their families by allowing them to make educated decisions about which dry cleaners they choose.



Massachusetts does not stand alone!

In 2014, New York City enacted almost identical regulations for garment cleaning businesses. Cleaners are now required to post a notice listing the primary chemicals used at their facility. Notices must include links to more detailed information about specific chemicals online to encourage customer awareness of health and safety concerns when choosing a garment cleaner.

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