



INCORPORATED

4550 Jackson Street Denver, CO 80216

FAX (303) 355-3516 / (800) 447-8326

www.steamway.com

1998

Technical Bulletins

For More Information, Contact Steam Way International at (303) 355-3566

TB9438 -Revised September 1998

PRESSURE WASHING OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE PROFESSIONAL CONTRACT CLEANER & RESTORER

Pressure washing is an industry that is going to undergo major changes as we enter into the 21st Century. In the past, manufacturers of pressure washing equipment concentrated their sales to contractors that had one particular purpose in mind. Most pressure washers were being used for a single activity at the job-site where they were located. Today, because of waste water issues, chemical safety issues, indoor and outdoor air and water pollution studies, and worker safety issues, much will change in how pressure washing acts as a service industry. The professional contract cleaner and/or restorer who stands ready to take advantage of these opportunities will not only find profits, but will also find new avenues into the total cleaning of the commercial environment. Pressure washing is probably one of the most overlooked area of diversification by the professional contract cleaner or restorer, but the opportunities that are becoming available will not allow it to be ignored any more.

The contract cleaner usually already has the equipment available to do at least some pressure washing with if he/she has a reliable truck-mounted carpet cleaning unit. He/she can start to diversify into this service by marketing pressure washing to his present customers. The professional cleaner, with a truck-mount has a major advantage over a company with a high pressure washer. The waste recovery abilities of the vacuum system on a cleaner or restorer's truck mounted equipment will become more and more important in the future due to environmental considerations. In the pressure washing industry, waste water handling systems are available to the contractor who is using just a pressure washing machine, but these waste water handling systems cost more than truck mounted carpet cleaners, and are often impractical to use. This makes the vacuum recovery capabilities of your truck mounted equipment a more practical alternative for waste water handling in many circumstances. Also, the problem solving background of the professional cleaner will allow him to tackle the more difficult, complex and, most importantly, profitable pressure washing jobs. Once the professional cleaner begins to adequately market pressure washing, it won't be long until he/she may need equipment that is designed just for pressure washing. But the point is, to get started now with what you already have.

The opportunities for pressure washing are everywhere: restrooms, restaurants, air conditioning systems, swimming pool areas, mobile homes, boats, airplanes, building cleaning, parking lots, garage areas, concrete cleaning, shopping cart cleaning, chewing gum and tar removal, and even race track cleaning are just a few of the opportunities that await you. Some of the people to market pressure washing to, besides your present customers, are store owners, construction companies, restaurants, and many others. Your best prospects are commercial building owners and property managers who are concerned about the indoor and outdoor appearances of their environments. The cleanliness and healthiness of those environments will have a major impact upon these people in the future. Here are just a few of the areas for which your equipment may be used as a pressure washer for building maintenance.

MAJOR ENTRY AREAS - What to look for: Here you would check concrete walkways, canopy covers, porous and irregular building faces, such as exposed aggregate and vehicle loading areas. Cleaning Problems To Solve. This would include rust stains, oil and grease, heavy dirt, sticky residue, gum, hand marks, graffiti, exhaust stains.

REST ROOMS - What to look for: Check tile, grout, covers on light fixtures, walls, filters and fan filter covers. Cleaning Problems To Solve. This would include dirt, grease, oils, hard water deposits, mildew, urine stains, soap scum, bacteria.

CAFETERIAS - What to look for: Here you would check floors, walls, hood vents, filters and fans, food preparation tables, grinders and slicers, coolers, refrigeration equipment, stoves and ovens, garbage areas. Cleaning Problems To Solve. This would include grease, bacteria, fats, dirt, syrup spills, general spillage.

GARAGE AREAS - What to look for: Here you would check floors, walls, and marking lines. Many cleaners are high pressure washing the oil, grease and dirt off of their customer's driveway and garage floor as an added service when they clean their carpet or upholstery. Cleaning Problems To Solve: Exhaust stains, rust from radiator boil-over, grease and general grime.

AIR CONDITIONING SYSTEMS, WINDOW AIR CONDITIONERS - What to look for: Here you would check coils and fans (clean periodically as they plug up and lose efficiency). Cleaning Problems to Solve: This would include grease, dust, dirt.

SWIMMING POOL AREAS - What to look for: Here you would check pool walls, deck area, filter pads, pool furniture, Cleaning Problems to Solve: This would include algae, rust, mildew, stains, hard water scale.

SPECIALIZED CLEANING OF BUILDINGS, PARKING LOT STRUCTURES, PARKING LOTS - What to look for: Here you would check floors, ceiling, and walls of parking lot structures, exterior walls, all affected surface, any support equipment such as mowers, sweepers, etc. Cleaning Problems To Solve: This would include smoke damage, exhaust fume stains, rust stains, hard water scale, graffiti, old and new brick cleaning, grease, grime.

Ideally, in order to effectively high-pressure wash, your truck mount should be able to create water pressure from 800-1500 psi and be able to maintain temperatures above 200°F at 4 gallons per minute of water flow. At present, the only heating systems available in truck mounts that can maintain these temperatures are kerosene fired, fuel oil burner systems. Truck mounts that cannot maintain those heat levels can effectively be used, but the opportunities are more limited. In addition, with many truck mounts, it is quite difficult to switch from carpet cleaning pressures to high pressure washing pressures. Truck mounts that include a valve system to instantly switch from carpet cleaning pressures to high pressure washing pressures are more ideally suited. The important thing is to first realize your equipment's potential and then take advantage of it. Talk to your supplier and find out how best you can use your equipment for pressure washing.

Another important avenue in pressure washing is choosing the right chemicals and the right cleaning jet. A large variety of both are available and a reputable supplier can provide the cleaner with the information necessary to choose the right one for each job. Now, specialty cleaning wands have been designed to use with truck mounts for cleaning restaurant hood vents and other hard surfaces, as well as squeegee floor washing wands, allow for immediate recovery of waste water, opening up an entirely new world of profit-making opportunities.

How do you know if a high pressure washing program is right for your business? First, look at your present operation. Many professional carpet cleaners are taking advantage of this high profit diversification right now. How many hours of operation can realistically your truck mounted equipment be used for? If your cleaning equipment has excess capacity that is not being used, perhaps you need to think about pressure washing as a way to use it. Contract cleaners and restorers have high pressure washed everything from restaurant oven vent systems to horse barns made of marble. Profitable growth is a goal which we all strive for. Throughout the entire community, there are a wide variety of buildings, restaurants, shopping centers, construction equipment, manufacturing facilities, etc., where opportunities lie. Your opportunities in high pressure washing are limited only to your imagination.

About the author:

Greg Bloss is the President of Steam Way International, Inc. in Denver, Colorado. Greg has been a part of the cleaning industry for over 18 years, having done everything from operating his own cleaning company to working in the research and development of Steam Way's truck mounted equipment. Steam Way International manufactures truck mounted carpet cleaning equipment that can be used for pressure washing and also manufactures cleaning solutions. For more information you can contact Steam Way by calling at 1-800-447-8326.