



VIOCLEAN FEATURED IN THE

WALL STREET JOURNAL

Wednesday, March 3rd, 2009

By GWENDOLYN BOUNDS

In this economy, it's tough to justify spending big bucks to replace dingy or stained furniture that's still perfectly functional. So instead, we opted for a New Year's penny-pinching spruce up, calling in the pros to give our sofas and armchairs a deep clean.

It's not hard to find an upholstery-cleaning service in most towns these days. Many carpet and rug cleaners also work on furniture; the Institute of Inspection, Cleaning and Restoration Certification, a not-for-profit group, says there are some 8,774 technicians certified specifically in upholstery and fabric cleaning in the U.S. The group lists U.S. cleaners trained under its criteria at www.certifiedcleaners.org. [Cranky Consumer] A. Richard Allen

Interest in furniture and carpet cleaning is on the rise, a signal that money-conscious homeowners are angling to eke more use out of their old stuff. Between 2004 and 2008, the number of inquiries to the Better Business Bureau about carpet and rug cleaners (many of which do upholstery) roughly doubled to 313,039, putting it in the top 1% of industries ranked.

We liked the professional work and that they honored their phone quote, also giving us a 20% first-time user discount. It was nice that they left sofa cushions to dry on brown paper, rather than on the floor.

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Gwendolyn Bounds, Wall Street Journal

We located four services in our test locations of Chicago, New York City, Brookline, Mass., and Garrison, N.Y., including two national chains, Scottsdale, Ariz.-based Cleanpro USA LLC and Heaven's Best, as well as two regional firms, York Carpet Care Inc. based in Englewood Cliffs, N.J., and VioClean LLC of Swampscott, Mass. All the services scheduled appointments within a few days to a week. However, while every company was able to improve our years of accumulated stains -- from coffee and wine to gravy and green ink -- we found they couldn't rub them out altogether in several instances. Cleaners say the longer a stain sits, the harder it is to remove; oils, hot coffee and ink are particularly persistent plagues.



A. Richard Allen

Two companies heavily promoted their eco-friendly cleaning chops: York Carpet and VioClean. VioClean uses only Procyon cleaning products, which are certified by a third party nonprofit group called Green Seal. (Green Seal currently certifies cleaning products, not home cleaning services, although it will begin to do so this spring.) **We were impressed by the professional demeanor of the VioClean workers, who spent two and a half hours scouring a six-foot-long putty-colored, pet-rubbed cotton-twill sofa with ink and dirt stains. They also scrubbed down an all-tile shower stall with grungy grout.**