



Is CRI Seal of Approval Necessary? April 21, 2011

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MUKILTEO, WA -- In the past few years, carpet cleaning equipment manufacturers have been re-designing their equipment with the goal of attaining the Seal of Approval (SOA) from the Carpet and Rug Institute (CRI). But is it something facility managers and building services contractors need or want?

Earning the SOA label means that carpet cleaning machine has undergone a battery of tests and meets specific standards for efficient and effective soil and moisture removal, as well as the overall protection of carpet fibers and appearance.

"As you can image, manufacturers believe the SOA rating for their machines is a feather in their cap," says Mark Baxter of U.S. Products, who has been directly involved with the company's new PEX-series of CRI-approved carpet extractors.

"And, distributors report it is a definite plus when marketing extractors to end-users."

But, is the SOA rating something customers are looking for as well?

According to Baxter, for carpet extractors, the answer has become more important in recent years and it is definitely yes. As he explains:

- The SOA rating is frequently required to honor many floor covering warranties.
- The SOA rating is typically required in order to attain LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) credits.
- The SOA rating is often necessary if a company is seeking Green Seal® approval.
- The SOA rating is generally obligatory by many cities and states that adopt Green cleaning standards.

Baxter adds that as more and more facilities seek LEED certification, there will be an even greater push to select carpet extractors bearing the SOA label.

"At first glance this appears to be more a factor for the professional cleaning industry (jansan)," says Baxter.

"But, because more [LEED] facilities are outsourcing their carpet cleaning work, they will likely ask carpet cleaning technicians if they use SOA equipment as well."