

## Purple patch problem

*By Colin Nation, Director WOOLSAFE Australia*

**As a WOOLSAFE Registered Inspector, I come across a number of problems not often seen by most carpet representatives or cleaners.**

The purple stain in this picture is the result of **optical brighteners** that are found in some cleaning products – but not in WOOLSAFE APPROVED ones, I hasten to add.



A consumer has had a spill on their carpet and purchased a product from the supermarket to remove the stain. While the product has removed the original stain, the optical brighteners left behind by the product have caused a much bigger problem.

Optical brighteners are often used in laundry products to make clothes look nice and bright. They work by taking in the ultra violet light (which is invisible to humans) and reflect it back out in the visible light range giving a bright, slightly purplish appearance.

**In the case of a laundry product**, this is not a bad thing because cloths are washed after just one day of use and the optical brightener is refreshed.

**But it can be a real problem on a carpet.** The optical brighteners attach like a dye and are pretty much impossible to remove.

This problem cannot be fixed with spot dyeing as the effect changes at different times of the day depending on the light source. If the amount of optical brightener used on a carpet is not evenly applied, then the carpet can become blotchy in different lights.

During the day this spot looks bright, but of an evening, the spot almost disappears completely.

This is one of the reasons that **WOOLSAFE Approved products must not contain optical brighteners.** It is one of the first tests done on a carpet cleaning product that is submitted for WOOLSAFE testing.

A chemical which contains optical brighteners is also non-compliant with the ANZ Standard 3733/1995.

From the picture it is plain to see why.

## Survey shows multiple benefits of WOOLSAFE brand and training

**As part of an ongoing development programme, The WOOLSAFE Organisation continually monitors feedback from all parts of the carpet and cleaning industry. Recently many members of our cleaners' network took the time to complete a questionnaire on The WOOLSAFE Organisation, its brand, services and training.**

Two thirds of our Certified Operators said that customers specifically mentioned the **WOOLSAFE Mark** as a deciding factor in choosing their company. And with some 86% of operators receiving several enquiries through the network every year, it shows that the Certified Operators Network really does make sense for any cleaning professional.

The importance of the WOOLSAFE Mark to Certified Operators also became clear, with 84% of those questioned displaying the logo on all their advertising. The most popular forms of advertising for these companies were through the Yellow Pages, leaflets and their own websites.

Of course, those that are already signed up members have been through our Certified Operator's **training** course with 100% of respondents to our survey saying it was interesting and informative and that they had learnt a great deal. 85% said they put into use what they learnt frequently or everyday.

Other benefits stated were: improved cleaning results: helped in diagnosing carpet faults and enhanced professional image.

The same level of satisfaction also applies to our **technical support**. Once again 100% of respondents who had used the helpline were satisfied with the service they received and many said it was of a very high standard.

The survey also gave its respondents the chance to say how they wanted **The WOOLSAFE Organisation to improve** and we really did get some great ideas. From annual meetings, carpet factory tours, to publicity drives in conjunction with other major associations, to creating relationships between manufacturers and retailers so that our Certified Operators become the only recommended cleaning professionals, input of this calibre is highly useful to WOOLSAFE.

The WOOLSAFE Organisation will be working hard to develop many, if not all, the ideas submitted so as to make its services even more valuable to all its members.

The survey also made it clear that our **WOOLSAFE Approved products** scheme is a firm success. All respondents in our survey said that these independently tested products performed as well as leading non-approved cleaners, with many saying that they cleaned better. Of course, we also know that WOOLSAFE Approved products are totally **safe for use** on wool and wool-rich carpets.

Our thanks to all those Certified Operators who took part in this survey. We are planning similar surveys in the future to make sure that each and every facet of our services are the very best they can be.

Rest assured, those areas of improvement highlighted in this survey are already being dealt with and expect to see updates on how we are improving our services very soon.

# MORE OF THE TRUTH ABOUT CARPET SPOT REMOVERS

The March issue of Which? magazine contained a report on consumer spot & stain removers. It made a controversial recommendation regarding the use of dishwashing liquid and recommended products which, WOOLSAFE found, did not live up to expectations.

We subjected the same products the Which? team tested (with the exception of two, which were unobtainable) to the principal WOOLSAFE tests, during which we followed the manufacturer's use instructions.

The results, presented in the table below, speak for themselves. The products are numbered to correspond with the ranking given by the Which? report. Products 1 to 5 were recommended by Which?, while products 6 to 14 were rated good to very good. Only product 16 failed to meet their grade.

While we have decided not to name the different products, we can reveal that products 1 and 3 are supermarket own brands, products 7 and 14 are solvent-based spotters and product 18 is washing up liquid.

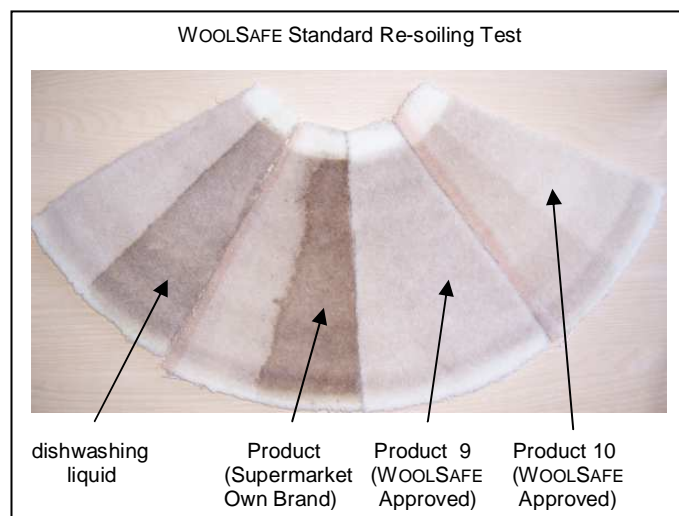
WOOLSAFE testing found that six of the spot removers, as well as the washing up liquid, failed to meet WOOLSAFE standards.

Some of the levels of re-soiling we measured was severe and would lead to a vicious cycle of cleaning–re-soiling–re-cleaning. One product was also likely to cause colour bleeding problems.

"That said, Which? constantly reviews its test methods and we will certainly consider your comments for any future tests we do."

We hope they will!

To illustrate the dangers of rapid re-soiling by using products 1 or 18 you only have to look at the picture! By contrast, WOOLSAFE Approved products don't cause any additional soiling.



## Management team expansion at WOOLSAFE Head Office

The WOOLSAFE Organisation's management team has been expanded to raise the profile of the organisation, its licensees, members and associated companies.

Steve Bakker has joined The WOOLSAFE Organisation as Promotions and Communications Manager. With a background in carpet care and maintenance, having been a WOOLSAFE Certified Operator working with both residential and commercial premises, Steve brings an added perspective to The WOOLSAFE Organisation's work:

Steve's experience and the knowledge he has gained through nine years as a professional carpet cleaner will stand him in excellent stead to fully understand the importance of WOOLSAFE's services and how these promote and support our members, associates and licensees.



Steve has already launched a campaign to encourage retailers to create hyperlinks from their website directly to the WOOLSAFE Certified Operator Network and WOOLSAFE Approved products pages on [www.woolsafe.org](http://www.woolsafe.org) with immediate results, along with a recruitment drive to get more carpet cleaners to join the network.

Other projects include: promoting WOOLSAFE Approved products to chemical distributors in the UK and elsewhere; action to further protect the WOOLSAFE marks from unauthorised use and working with WOOLSAFE's webmaster to further enhance the website and improve its ranking on internet search engines.

"The WOOLSAFE Organisation's many facets require continual monitoring and I'll take every step possible to ensure that we are promoting all our services effectively," comments Steve Bakker. "With our status as the leading independent authority on the care and maintenance of carpet and rugs it is imperative that our any important messages reach as far and as wide as possible."

Product Ranking	WOOLSAFE Evaluation				Meets WOOLSAFE Standards
	Alkalinity	Colour fastness	Re-soiling	Spot Removal	
1	Pass	Pass	Fail	Pass	No
2	Pass	Pass	Fail	Pass	No
3	Pass	Pass	Fail	Pass	No
4	Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass	WOOLSAFE Approved
5	Pass	N/A	Pass	Pass	Yes
6	Fail	Fail	Pass	Pass	No
7	N/A	N/A	Pass	Pass	Yes
8	Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass	Yes
9	Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass	WOOLSAFE Approved
10	Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass	WOOLSAFE Approved
11					Unobtainable
12	Pass	Pass*	Pass	Pass	Yes
13	Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass	Yes
14	N/A	N/A	Fail	Border line	No
15	Pass	Border Line	Pass	Pass	Yes
16	Fail	Not tested	Fail	Pass	No
17					Unobtainable
18	Pass	Not tested	Fail	Not tested	No

We reported our findings to the people at Which?, who stated that that they "aim to test products that replicate how a typical consumer would use them. As such...not always...according to a set of standards, but develop bespoke test programmes that reflect how a product might be used day-to-day. ...We are confident that our test method accurately reflects the way a consumer would use stain removers."

## Approved products update

Recently three more chemical manufacturers world wide have become WOOLSAFE licensees.

In the UK, leading consumer cleaning product supplier, **Reckitt Benckiser UK Ltd** have revised their carpet cleaning range, and three of them now comply with WOOLSAFE requirements.

**Vanish Carpet & Upholstery Shampoo** is a cleaning and anti-resoil formulation for manual cleaning of large areas. The cleaner contains a unique polymer that provides enhanced stain removal, ensures no sticky residue is left behind, and it also keeps your carpet cleaner for longer and helps prevent carpet pile from flattening.




**NOTE: Never use the undiluted shampoo on wool carpets.**

**Vanish Oxi Action Carpet & Upholstery Stain Remover** is specially formulated for both carpet and upholstery stains. Boosted with **active oxygen**, its formula penetrates deep into your carpet and upholstery to break down and remove stains right before your eyes. It works well on difficult stains such as red wine, coffee, tea and blackcurrant juice.



**Vanish Powershot's** powerful formula drives deep into the carpet pile, loosening and lifting even the toughest stains.

Manufactured in Austria by  **CARPET CLEANER** **In mainland Europe**, Austrian manufacturer, **Carpet Cleaner** have gained approval for their 100% natural **Carpet Cleaning Compound**. The pH-neutral sponge-like particles consist of renewable organic materials, and contain biodegradable, phosphate free active agents. Easy usage and short drying time makes this low moisture cleaning product an ideal choice for commercial locations. It is also very good for cleaning oily stains.

In America, **Harris Research Inc**, supplying the Chem-Dry franchises, has become the latest WOOLSAFE licensee.



Their two new products, **Natural for Wool**, an effective in-tank cleaner; and **Pre-Spray for Wool** will be available for their professional cleaners, so they can clean wool carpets with increased confidence. Both products clean very well without leaving a sticky residue or having other undesirable side effects.



American Flooring giant, **Mohawk Industries** have expanded their range of approved products.

For the commercial market they developed a detergent free, environmentally responsible carpet

cleaner, called **Mohawk FloorCare Essentials Carpet & Rug Cleaner**. For treating heavily soiled areas they offer **Mohawk FloorCare Essentials Traffic Lane Pre-spray**, which contains an advanced surfactant/solvent system to target difficult spots and oily residues. **Matrix Aviation Blended Carpet & Rug Cleaner** and **Matrix Aviation Blended Traffic Lane Pre-spray** were formulated for the aviation industry and they both passed strict safety tests before being approved to being used on wool carpets in aircrafts.

**Mohawk's** new product for the consumer market, **Mohawk FloorCare Essentials Carpet Stain Remover**, was developed following both WOOLSAFE and EPA Design for the Environment specifications, so not only is it safe and effective on wool carpets, but it is better for the environment too.

## Profits grow with Astonishing Results



Leeds-based firm **Astonish** lived up to their name by reporting an increase in sales of some 15% with their cleaning products in both the UK and export markets, bucking the general trend for manufacturing companies.

The brand's MD, **Howard Moss** says 'The key to growth for **Astonish** has been sticking to what in essence we have always done: producing the best quality product, at the lowest possible price. We are also delighted to be answering increasing customer demand for environmentally focused cleaning products, a key principle we have remained focused on.'



Today the **Astonish** range, which includes the WOOLSAFE approved concentrated **Carpet & Upholstery Shampoo** and the instant **Shampoo for Carpets & Upholstery**, is sold across 50 countries worldwide, with a huge demand in new markets.



For many years now **Astonish's** key UK customers, such as Home Bargains, Wilkinsons, Savers, 99p Stores, and B&M Retail, have operated within the discount sector. By maintaining a strong presence in this out-performing sector, the company's sales have benefited. Whilst the demise of Woolworths was a sad day for British retailing, a vast proportion of their store portfolio has been inherited by **Astonish's** existing customers, resulting in further demand for the company's products.

Another key contributing factor to the brand's growth has been the product's price consistency. Many competitor products have increased in price during the last two years due to rising raw material costs. **Astonish** customers are under severe pressure to reduce retail costs and keep the retail ticket constant and as **Astonish** has not increased prices, customers have remained loyal to the **Astonish** brand.

**Maintaining the key reasons for **Astonish's** success – best quality at lowest possible price, has not come at a cost to other key issues such as the environment and preventing cruelty to animals.** Not only do all the **Astonish** cleaning items have no adverse effect on the environment, the company also bans all animal testing, both in its laboratory and across all suppliers of raw materials. **Astonish** also values independent testing and certification of their products: they have been WOOLSAFE licensees since 2000.

### Aiming for growth in 2009/2010

The next challenge for **Astonish** is to hit £12m in 2009/2010. To accommodate growth in sales and distribution, **Astonish** will be relocating within the next 12 months to a brand new 65,000 sq ft state-of-the art manufacturing site in Yorkshire. **Moss** says 'This will allow our physical output, logistics and development to be maintained, ensuring our customers receive their **Astonish** stocks in the three day lead time they have come to expect'.

**We wish them every success for the future!**

### Products no longer WOOLSAFE approved

**Vax Ltd** has discontinued their **Spot and Stain Remover for homes with Pets**, and their new, stronger product, **Vax Spot and Stain**, is not suitable for wool carpets.

## WOOLSAFE training courses in 2009

These courses are for carpet cleaning companies or individuals who wish to learn more about wool carpet maintenance, or to become WOOLSAFE Certified Operators.

IICRC certified technicians will earn one CEC credit on completion of the course.

### United Kingdom

#### 30 September 2009 - High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire

**Venue:** SEBO (UK) Ltd, Merlin Centre, Cressex Business Park, High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire, HP12 3QL  
**Course starts:** 09.30 hrs, and finishes 16.30 hrs  
**Course tutor:** Paul Bakker & Dr Ágnes Zsednai  
**Contact:** The WOOLSAFE Organisation, 01943 850 817  
 stella@woolSAFE.org

#### 4 October 2009 Bradford, West Yorkshire

**Venue:** Wool House, Roydsdale Way, Euroway Trading Estate, Bradford, BD4 6SE  
**Course starts:** 09.30 hrs, and finishes 16.30 hrs  
**Course tutor:** Paul Bakker & Dr Ágnes Zsednai  
**Contact:** The WOOLSAFE Organisation, 01943 850 817  
 stella@woolSAFE.org

#### 21 October 2009 – Kidderminster, Worcestershire

**Venue:** Brintons Social Club, Walter Nash Road East, Oldington, Kidderminster, DY11  
**Course starts:** 09.30 hrs, and finishes 16.30 hrs  
**Course tutor:** Paul Bakker & Dr Ágnes Zsednai  
**Contact:** The WOOLSAFE Organisation, 01943 850 817  
 stella@woolSAFE.org

#### 4 November 2009 - High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire

**Details:** As for 30 September, see above.

#### 26 November 2009 - Farnham, Surrey

**Venue:** National Flood School, 47A Wrecclesham Road, Farnham, Surrey, GU9 8TY  
**Course starts:** 09.30 hrs, and finishes 16.30 hrs  
**Course tutor:** Adam Jankowski, NFS  
**Contact:** The WOOLSAFE Organisation, 01943 850 817  
 stella@woolSAFE.org

Now **only £99.00 + VAT** per delegate.

**Course fee** includes refreshments, (light) lunch, handouts, course manual and examination papers, but NOT WOOLSAFE membership and company registration/listing fees.

### Australia

#### Courses in conjunction with the CleanLink Convention

##### 8-10 October 2009 - Gold Coast

**Subject:** WOOLSAFE Certified Operator course  
**Venue:** Twin Towns Services Club, Gold Coast  
**Course tutor:** Colin Nation

##### 12-13 October 2009 - Gold Coast

**Subject:** WOOLSAFE Registered Inspector course  
**Venue:** Twin Towns Services Club, Gold Coast  
**Course tutor:** Colin Nation

**For both courses contact** Colin Nation, WOOLSAFE Australia, at office@woolSAFE.com.au, phone 0408 966 500; fax 07 5493 4491.

## WOOLSAFE Australia News

The Perth WOOLSAFE course went well. Thank you to ABCO Products in Bentley W.A for hosting the course.

A WOOLSAFE Registered Inspector and a Certified Operator course will be held in conjunction with the NUCCA CleanLink Convention (See above for course dates).

The Inspector's course will include a demonstration of the chemical testing required for diagnosing many carpet related problems. It also includes a tour of the Beaulieu carpet mill on Wednesday, 14<sup>th</sup> October.

## WOOLSAFE North America News

With the growth in popularity of wool area rugs and fine wool carpet, the WOOLSAFE Approved Service Provider network is expanding steadily in the US and Canada.

There had been a number of successful training courses & seminars over the past few months, with the new on-line training course ([www.cleancareseminars.com/woolSAFE](http://www.cleancareseminars.com/woolSAFE)) proving to be the most popular for technicians wanting to learn more about wool. Students like the convenience of working through the material at work or home at their own pace and taking the exam when they feel they are ready. The most committed ones, amongst them several Fiber-Seal franchisees, have signed up to be Approved Service Providers, so they can enjoy the full benefit of WOOLSAFE promotion including the website listing. Wools of New Zealand is also recognizing WOOLSAFE Approved Service Providers on their website.

The number of consumer enquiries has grown considerably over the past few months. Some of the topics of interest have included "What to do about moth infestation?", "What vacuum cleaner should I use to prevent damage to my carpet?", and "What can I use to remove adhesive residue left from duct tape?" Several WOOLSAFE Service Providers have received referrals from headquarters because of these enquiries. Consumers are happy to find out that there are professional cleaning companies they can trust with their fine furnishings.

**"Wool is growing in popularity here in Canada and I am very proud to be a WOOLSAFE Service Provider"** says Bill Soukoreff, Owner Operator of Get Fresh Carpet Cleaning in Calgary, Alberta. Bill has also taken on the task of converting the Service Provider Mark into a sticker for his van and sending the design back to us for general use. Thanks Bill, and hope all your advertising pays off!

WOOLSAFE North America is a Connections – Las Vegas Gold Co-sponsor in conjunction with Clean Care Seminars. There will be a 4 hour hands-on rug cleaning demonstration on Friday, September 11<sup>th</sup>. Attendees will be able to see first hand the benefit of using WOOLSAFE approved chemicals in their rug cleaning operations. North American Director, Ruth Travis, will be available both in the booth at the trade show and during the demonstration to answer any question regarding the WOOLSAFE program or hosting a WOOLSAFE class.

## WOOLSAFE Certified Operators Network

Welcome to the most recently joined members of our

### Great Britain and Ireland network:

Mr Stuart Kerr, **Swift Cleaning Services Ltd**  
 Unit 2, Blackbushe Business Village, Blackbushe Business Park  
 Yateley, Hampshire, GU46 6GA  
 Tel: 01252 874 600, Fax: 01252 877 717  
 stuart@swiftcleaning.com, www.swiftcleaning.com

Mr John McRobie, **Clean & Fresh Ltd**  
 43 Coronation Ave, Moordown, Bournemouth, Dorset, BH9 1TW  
 Tel: 01202 779 775, Mobile: 07940 734 964  
 cleanandfresh@ntworld.com, www.cleanandfreshltd.com

### Australia network:

Michael Mulquiney, **Regal Carpets**, Kilmore, Victoria  
 Andrew Stones, **Touchstone Cleaning**, Mildura, Victoria