
Perchloroethylene (PERC) Equipment Replacement Voucher: Questions and Answers

Information for vendors and Pollution Prevention Assistance representatives

Ecology is offering reimbursements to dry cleaners to switch from perchloroethylene (PERC) to a safer alternative.

Dry cleaners can get up to:

- \$20,000 to switch to professional wet cleaning, or
- \$10,000 to switch to hydrocarbon.

How will the new PERC Equipment Replacement Voucher work?

Dry cleaners need to go through a series of steps to get reimbursed for new equipment:

1. Meet with their local [Pollution Prevention Assistance](#)¹ representative or Ecology representative to see if they qualify and get enrolled.
2. Once they are enrolled in the program and have been issued a voucher, they will need to arrange financing and schedule a date and time to install their new machine.
 - a. A voucher should be initiated only if the facility has committed to converting to professional wet cleaning (PWC) or hydrocarbon within 6 months of this visit.
3. Install new equipment and decommission the old machine. An Ecology representative will need to be present to witness the machine decommissioning.
4. Businesses will meet with their local representative one more time to complete their paperwork and submit supporting receipts.

What general criteria must recipients meet?

Reimbursement recipients must:

- Be a Washington State licensed business.
- Be a dry cleaner that uses PERC.
- Properly clean and dispose of their PERC dry cleaning equipment.
- Properly dispose of all detergents, spot cleaners, wastes, and other chemicals used with their PERC machine.
- Allow Ecology to oversee decommissioning activities and verify they have disposed of the old machine and the chemicals used with it.
- Follow the terms and conditions listed in the voucher application form that will be provided during the initial visit.
- Not be undergoing enforcement actions from Ecology.

¹ ecology.wa.gov/PPA

Why does Ecology prefer professional wet cleaning (PWC)?

Professional wet cleaning (PWC) is the safest alternative cleaning method. It uses water and detergents to clean all types of fabrics, including clothes labeled “dry clean only.”

It is our preferred method because:

- It is the safest for worker health and the environment.
- It eliminates hazardous waste.
- Dry cleaners can achieve lower operating costs by reducing energy and water use.

Why is Ecology offering more to switch to PWC?

Ecology considers professional wet cleaning the safest option for human health and the environment. We offer more for this option because:

- It does not produce any hazardous waste.
- It has a low environmental footprint.
- It can reduce energy and water use.

Why is hydrocarbon considered our second best option?

We recommend switching to a high-flashpoint hydrocarbon solvent for dry cleaners who prefer a solvent based system. Compared to PERC, hydrocarbon is:

- Better for human health.
- Better for the environment.

However, it is not our preferred method because:

- Even when operated correctly, hydrocarbon machines often produce dangerous wastes (for example, still bottoms).
- These petroleum solvents are combustible and have the greatest risk of fire and explosion. Although these are considered high flashpoint hydrocarbons, they could ignite with frictional spark, a burning cigarette, heated equipment, or even static electricity.

Learn more about hydrocarbon at the [Toxics Use Reduction Institute's \(TURI's\) PERC Alternative Assessment Information web site](#).²

Questions?

Contact us at 425-649-4495 or ProductReplacement@ecy.wa.gov.

² www.bitly.com/hcsolvent