

CONTENTS SOLUTIONS

THE GO-TO-GUIDE FOR PERSONAL PROPERTY RESTORATION

Vol. 9, Issue 5

ORIENTAL RUGS

CONTENTS RESTORATION SECRETS

THE AUSTRALIAN SOLUTION

ULTRASONICS DOWN UNDER

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Secrets of the Orient; Rug Revelations

Lisa Wagner, RIA/NIRC Certified Rug Specialist, and past member of the RIA Textile Council, once wrote an article in which she recounted seeing wet, Chinese “sculpted” wool rugs being carried out into the sun for drying, only to discover a short time later that the elaborate color in them had absolutely vanished as the direct rays bleached the pigments away! These rugs were a cheap, inexpensive version of their more treasured sisters. But the lesson was learned! Contents processing professionals have many ways to dry expensive rugs - none of them involve direct sunlight!

Another author recalls having read an article by one well meaning researcher, who suggested that when one part of a fine Oriental or Persian rug has become faded by being exposed to the sun, then the best remedy is to take that rug out into the sun, cover the faded spots and allow the sun to bleach the rest so it matches! Which all sounds a lot like a good plot line for an episode of, “I Love Lucy!”

All rugs are dyed originally and all restoration processing companies either have a “dye master,” on staff or have established a strong relationship with an associate dye master firm.

One of the great things about restoration processing pros is that they can, more often than not, restore a valuable rug to a

like-new appearance - but wait! Maybe you don't want a “like-new” appearance; in fact some rug makers actually bleach their colors so they are muted and soft instead of bright and deeply hued. A quick way to determine how to return a rug to the color the owner is used to seeing is to turn the rug over and see what colors the underside presents - that will give you an idea of what the colors were like in years gone by.

Another good way is to show the owner the underside of the rug and just ask, “Is this how you would like it to look?” Viola!

And if you are responsible for making sure the owner is satisfied with the rug's final appearance, here is a contents processor's “insider secret,” - contents pros will secretly mark one edge of the rug before removing it and will measure how far the rug was originally placed from the closest windows and walls, so that the correct edge is pointing to the north and the rug is actually returned to the exact spot the insured is used to seeing it and in the same configuration he (she) has seen it so many times before. Why? Because if it is turned the “wrong” way or is too far from the light of a window, etc., it may look “wrong” to the owner! Even though you have returned it in absolutely restored condition!

The fees for an expert to restore a rug are a fraction of what it would cost to replace a good Oriental or Persian rug and of course its history and “story” are always irreplaceable.

Ultrasonics – The Australian Solution

The Australian contents processing specialists have been using ultrasonics to restore everything from delicate electronics to engine blocks and have helped such diverse clients as the Royal Australian Mint, Qantas Airlines, hospitals, universities and even the Australian Department of Defense.

When they are asked, “Are ultrasonic cleaning machines worth all the effort?” they are quick to respond. Ultrasonics, they tell us, can actually reduce cleaning time by a remarkable degree. And they like the fact that this highly effective and environmentally friendly technology can reach into intricate and hidden crevices in

ways no other cleaning device can. Their team workers don't have to be exposed to hazardous chemicals that are often used by restoration companies that don't have an ultrasonics machine and they can dramatically reduce the amount of disposal for such chemicals.

Ultrasonic technology is faster, uses less water, less chemicals, cleans more deeply and thoroughly than similar jobs performed by hand, but is so gentle it can clean fragile antique porcelain, and so powerful it can strip the rust off oxidized metal.

The Australians give a decided “thumbs up,” to ultrasonic cleaning.





Police, Jails and Prisons Find Help in Unexpected Places

When attorney Kathleen Carey visited a client in Maricopa County Jail, the farthest thing from her mind was that she was exposing herself to a life-threatening bacteria. But shortly after her visit, she developed a full blown case of MRSA (methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus*) an antibiotic resistant form of the Staph infection. The term is used to describe a number of strains of the bacteria, *Staphylococcus aureus*, that have evolved to become resistant to a many antibiotics, including methicillin.

After \$180,000 worth of medical treatment, Carey thought the worst was over — then, two months later, her 17-year-old son was using her computer and became severely infected with the flesh eating bacteria. At one point it appeared that his physicians might have to amputate his arm.

Contents processing companies have become the nation's first line of defense against this aggressive "superbug," and have numerous stories to tell of their successes.

One Baltimore company had been routinely cleaning football equipment and uniforms for local teams, so when the sheriff's department realized that its bulletproof vests had become a breeding ground for malodorous bacteria, it asked for some expert help.

The contents company had recently acquired a superior industrial cleaning system that the manufacturer tells us, "... kills 99.9997% of the harmful bacteria in hard and soft goods..."

The bulletproof vests were expensive to replace and they could still stop bullets, but they couldn't stop bacteria, so getting them sanitized was a major bargain.

"I sent them some bulletproof vests that are still usable but kind of had that odor to them," Deputy Don Micheletti, of the Anne Arundel County Sheriff's Department, said. "When we got them back they smelled very pretty, much better than when we sent them there."

The sheriff's department would have thrown away the \$400 vests if they weren't cleaned, he said.

And, the sheriff's department liked this new contents cleaning technique so much that they recently sent some old batons, handcuffs and leg irons to be cleaned. Deputy Micheletti said getting those things cleaned can prevent outbreaks of illness in cells in addition to saving the department money.

Hospitals, prisons, sports teams, nursing homes and many others are counting on these new processes to keep their most valuable assets (those in their care) safe.

Processing Pros – The 'MacGyvers' of the Restoration Industry

Do you recall the old "MacGyver" television series? He was a hero who had to overcome monumental challenges with nothing but his brain and a pocket knife.

Contents processing pros are often faced with seemingly impossible challenges as well – their secret? Improvise!

A New York company, with an extensive contents facility, was asked to tackle a major oil spill that had devastated a bird sanctuary. Eighty battle-hardened pros (this same company was one of the major "players" at Ground Zero and was called in for the anthrax scare in the Governor's office), spread out at the water's edge, gathering tar balls that were as big as bowling balls. Their boss hand-picked some workers and joined the volunteers who were saving the oil soaked birds. With the gentlest cleaners, they washed feathers, rinsed and washed again. But for some of the birds it was too late. They had tried to clean their own feathers and had ingested the dark poison.

Nobody gave up – processing professionals restore, not replace. They got clever and fed the birds Pedialyte® to rehydrate them, and Pepto-Bismol® to bond with the oil and allow it to pass harmlessly through their ravaged bodies.

It wasn't a new idea – just new to the industry.



We See the Light

Ultraviolet light is a most useful device for contents processing professionals. It can be used to locate urine and other bio-contaminants. And to "see" lost letters and symbols in old books and on ancient pottery, so they can be restored. It can be used to de-activate bacteria and even clear the air of harmful viruses and airborne bacteria (one report tells us that, "UV light has been shown to control airborne tuberculosis, which recently has been making a comeback.") Most useful indeed!



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