Headlines More

North East Fabricare Association www.nefabricare.com

# NEFA's 20th Annual Clean Classic Set for July 22!



NEFA'S ANNUAL SUMMER EVENT WILL BE BACK AT BLACKSTONE NA-TIONAL GOLF COURSE IN SUTTON, MA ON WEDNESDAY, JULY 22 AT 9:45.

Blackstone National has hosted the past two years and participants have loved the course. It is playable, but challenging at times. NEFA has also changed the scoring format to a "Bramble" instead of the traditional scramble. The changes were met with great enthusiasm, and all those who

entered liked the new competitive nature, the course, and the great food. In this format, all players tee off, the group selects the spot of the best drive, and then all players hit their second shot from that spot and play their own ball in through the hole. The team then records the two best scores for the hole using the handicap provided. This enables players to play more of their own shots, and the handicapping systems makes if fair for all players in all skill levels.

The cost will be the same as last year: \$150/player which includes the Brad Friel Action Pack. The Action Pack includes 5 raffle tickets, 1 Mulligan, and enters you into the skills competition. The registration fee includes greens fees, cart, lunch at the turn, dinner, prizes, and even a couple beers to help you beat the heat! This is an extremely popular event, so register early!

## THE BRAD FRIEL MEMORIAL CLEAN CLASSIC

Several years ago the NEFA Board decided to re-name the tournament after long-time NEFA member, former NEFA President, and all-around fun loving friend to all -- Brad Friel. He passed away much too early after a battle with pancreatic cancer. Those who were fortunate enough to know Brad, and to have enjoyed his friendship, remember how much he loved this event and looked forward to seeing all his NEFA friends and associates on the links. The old adage *"it isn't the years in the life -- but the life in the years"* never fit anyone so well. He loved life, enjoyed golf, and enjoyed all his NEFA friends. It was in that spirit that we all remember him during this event!

Hope to see you out in the sunshine with us! To register, download a registration form at www.nefabricare.com or call NEFA at 800-442-6848.

MAY/JUNE 2015

## IN THIS ISSUE

| President's Message2                                  |
|---|
| Mandatory Boiler License Renewal<br>Training Workshop |
| Over Promising and Under<br>Delivering4               |
| NEFA Has Gone Social6                                 |
| MA Inspections Expose<br>Non-Compliance issues6       |
| Harnessing the Power of Your<br>Database              |
| NEFA Opposes CT Sales Tax<br>Expansion10              |
| Allied Trade Members11                                |

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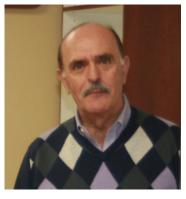
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# **NEFA Board Report: Education and Communications Main Priorities**

THE NEFA BOARD MET RECENTLY AT SPECTOR TEXTILES IN LAWRENCE, MA. WE REVIEWED HOW THE ASSOCIATION IS DOING, AND EXPLORED SOME OF THE WAYS WE CAN BETTER SERVE OUR MEM-BERS.

The Board is committed to expanding our education program and also in strengthening our communications with our members. We are pleased with the results of our new newsletter format, "Headlines&More" and we are pleased with the



John Dallas, NEFA President

feedback we have gotten from members. It is apparent that members enjoy receiving the printed copies in the mail. We will also begin e-mailing notifications to all members and non members when each issue is published. We will be posting them online at www.nefabricare.com for those who wish to view electronic copies.

NEFA will be revamping its website in the coming months and will be including important program updates and helpful tools you can use to build your business or monitor your regulatory compliance.

We have also established a Facebook page for NEFA. We will be posting at least weekly on the page to keep members updated on NEFA's activities.

## **EDUCATION**

The NEFA Education program is also expanding. We have already started to develop a series of webinars with the first one airing last month: "Quite Spinning Your Wheels and Driving in Circles" featuring James Peuster. The first one went extremely well, and we are already planning more in the coming months.

We have also developed a Massachusetts Boiler license Training Program that is being held July 11. We will be hosting a series of Customer Service programs in up-state NY during the week of August 10th. We are finalizing plans to be in Schenectady, Rochester, and Buffalo. These programs will be presented by Peter Blake. Peter is also developing a Regulatory Compliance Workshop that will be hosted in Massachusetts in August and early September. In light of the increased activity in MA -- this is an extremely important program.

I am really excited about the direction NEFA is headed in and I will try and keep you updated on all the activities!

# John Dallas

Fabricare House 781-337-4495 / JohnD3473@aol.com

# **MA Mandatory Boiler License Training**



IN MASSACHU-SETTS, ALL BOIL-MUST ERS BE OPERATED BY A LICENSED OP-ERATOR. MOST DRYCLEANERS HAVE **"SPECIAL** LICENSE TO OP-ERATE OR BE IN CHARGE". Once you

obtain your initial license, in order to renew them, you have to complete 6-hours of continuing education.

NEFA has teamed up with the Technology Learning Center to develop a 6-hour continuing education course to renew Special Boiler Operator and Special Boiler Operator In Charge licenses. A certificate to renew your license will be awarded to all attendees.

This course satisfies the Massachusetts Department of Public Safety's continuing education requirements to renew your license.

This is crucial to all operators holding current licenses that need to be renewed.

Those who Attend this workshop and learn:

- Boiler plant principles
- Boiler plant operation and maintenance
- Water treatment for boiler plant
- Understanding your boiler
- Massachusetts laws and regulations regarding boiler operation

The program will be Saturday, July 11 from 8:30 AM - 2:30 PM. The cost for NEFA/DLI members is \$225/person and \$325 for non-members.

There is a strict maximum class size of 20 and there are only 12 seats left! Please register ASAP to ensure the program will be held, and to guarantee your spot!

Unsure about your compliance? Call Peter Blake for assistance.



# **Over-Promising and Under-Delivering**

Written by James Peuster, 21st Century Drycleaning & NEFA Board Member



AS MANY OF YOU KNOW, MY ROUTE CONSULTING STEMS FROM BEST PRACTICES IN THE INDUSTRY AND SOME-TIME WHAT WORKS FOR ONE CLEANERS, MAY NOT WORK FOR ANOTHER.

Demography, market price range, labor pool, climate etc. all create variances in how we must operate. Unfortunately, many cleaners try

other best practices hoping that they can build their route by going the extra mile without realizing they are spending extra time and money to service a client which doesn't generate extra income.

I get it, we must separate ourselves from the competition in order to out-feature/out-benefit our competition. The amazing this is that we don't always see the ROI of the extra stuff we do. But then you realize you raised the expectations of the customer and now you get stuck in the trap of continual over-servicing that leads to under-delivering. The questions I receive is two-fold: Why Did You Do It & How Do I Prevent It From Happening Again.

## WHY DID YOU DO IT?

With routes you probably had the extra time to over service customers and this is a typical response I get. "We had the time and this is what the customer wants." You set boundaries at your stores; why don't you set them on the routes?" They established their route systems early and stuck to it through growth, bad economic times and sales. Others faced the fears of losing a customer and extended the boundaries while lowering their profit. It's much like discounting, I'm all for it if your bottom line allows room to reinvest in your company. Obviously the exception is your top 10% of your customers-you do go the extra for them, but not for the 3-4 times a year customers. Drivers will sometime over service in order to work extra hours, make an excuse not to sell or just not be home. Some drivers work 60-70 hours a week by their own choice, then complain that they are over worked. Seriously, it happens.

## HOW DO I PREVENT IT

The second question is the hard part. Since many are relying on their route for survival purposes, our outside sales people are required to add customers weekly. Because we focus on this, we tend to say "Yes" to prospects requests before we know how good of a customer they are. The worst part is when we offer the additional options before the prospect is asking questions. I've heard comments like, "Where do you want me to deliver your clothes?"

## THE BOTTOM LINE

The bottom line is this: customer service should not come at a loss. I've seen it too many times; a driver go out of his way for a \$10 order, spending 2 gallons of gas, 30 minutes of time for a customer who uses 4 times a year. Believe me, I am huge fan of "RAVING FANS", but many times this gets misinterpreted and I inform everyone to be careful. Focus on your top 10-20% of your customers--they complain less, ask for less and delivery consistency to them--you will grow profitably.

James will be building on his Management Training Systems and be compiling a Management Training Program for NEFA's Fall Fest Program in November. Keep watch for details, James continues to be a leader in the industry -- and a tremendous resource for education and management training.

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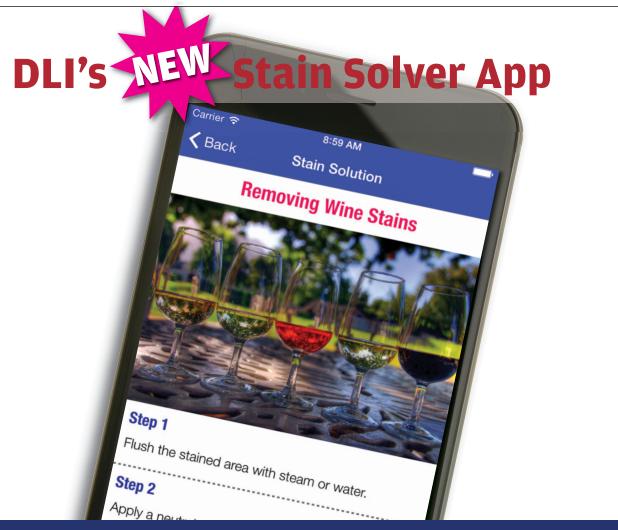
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# **NEFA Has Gone Social**



NEFA HAS OFFI-CIALLY GONE SO-CIAL! SEARCH FOR US ON FACEBOOK!

We have recently updated our website, www.nefabricare.com for mobile access, and we are upgrading our communications vehicles. We want to

use the power of social media to help us engage our members, and to help us promote our services.

"We have been preaching the power of social media marketing to our membership for years," observed Peter Blake, NEFA Executive Vice President, "and now we are using those tools to help serve our members. It is our strong desire to reach as many cleaners as possible and to share the NEFA story with the entire industry."

NEFA will be using Facebook to keep members posted on all NEFA activities and to show pictures of the different events and happenings. NEFA will also be updating our Facebook Status as our webpage is updated, and will be sharing links to issues of "Headlines&More" as they are published.

Facebook provides a terrific forum to keep people informed of all the opportunities NEFA holds for members. From DLI Scholarships, to upcoming educational events to business building advice -- these types of platforms help to share information instantly.

In turn we want to be able to share your social media pages with other members. Facebook is a perfect opportunity to connect with your peers throughout the region.

## **NOT ON FACEBOOK?**

If you aren't yet taking advantages of some of the power of these social media programs, let us help you. DLI is structuring a new program to help get members on to social media programs like Facebook, Twitter, and even Yelp.

NEFA has expertise in using these tools to your advantage, and can help you develop a program to help you build your business. For more information on making Social Media work for you, contact Peter Blake at the NEFA Office: 800-442-6848 or by e-mail: peter@nefabricare.com.

## **MA Inspections Expose Non-Compliance Issues**



WE RECENTLY ALERTED MEM-BERS TO AN IN-CREASE IN MA DEP INSPEC-TIONS, AND THE RESULTS HAVE BEEN DISCON-CERTING.

One drycleaner that

was inspected faced potential fines totalling close to \$15,000. NEFA accompanied the member to a DEP conference where the proposed fines were lowered to below \$3,000.

"As is the case with most drycleaners," commented Peter Blake, "violations are usually non-serious in nature, but they can build up over time. There is a great willingness to comply in this industry, but bad habits and routine maintenance issues -- coupled with poor record keeping -- remain serious issues."

NEFA is working with the DEP and with OTA to develop some training tools to assist in compliance and regulatory monitoring. Peter Blake will be presenting a series of Regulatory Compliance Workshops in Massachusetts prior to September 15 to ensure MA cleaners are able to fill out the ERP Certification accurately, completely, and understand the ramifications of the answers given on the forms.

## **UPCOMING DEADLINES**

There are two key filing deadlines that Massachusetts cleaners need to remember. The first is July 1, when all drycleaners that use over 75 gallons of perc AND have 10 or more full time equivalent employees (FTEs) must file with the Toxic Use Reduction Program.

The second is September 15, when all Perc drycleaners need to complete the ERP Self-Certification forms.

"Cleaners have been filing out the ERP forms for years," explained Blake, "but over time I think the meaning of the forms is starting to be over looked. These forms are a certification that you are following all the prescribed guidelines and regs. If you are saying yes -- you had better know what you are certifying to!"

If you have compliance questions, or are unsure of your compliance situation, contact the NEFA Office today. NEFA has numerous tools and information that can help. NEFA can also conduct a Regulatory Compliance Audit for you.

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## Harnessing the Power of Your Database

Written By Peter Blake, SEFA Executive Director



FIRST AND FORE-MOST, LET ME BE CLEAR: IF YOU ARE NOT USING THE POWER OF E-MAIL MARKETING YOU ARE LEAVING PROFIT ON THE TABLE.

The most common complaint I hear is that volume is down. There are only

really two basic ways to increase volume: get new customers, or have your current customers bring you more volume. Your best customer is your current customer. They already know the value of your service, and if you want to increase volume in your plant -- one of the best ways is to leverage that relationship. E-mail marketing can be the most powerful, and cost effective, tool in your marketing toolbox. You can use e-mail newsletters and postcards to highlight little known services, or to highlight company specials you have running. There is no better way to get your message out there than to be direct, and to be aggressive.

One of the most common hesitations is that cleaners don't want to

coupon. E-mail marketing does not have to be discount driven. In fact -- I believe the most interesting and useful the information, the more apt it is to work. DLI has been creating "Consumer News you Can Use" for use by members for over a year now. These articles are useful, helpful -- and they drive sales. There is a tremendous value to letting your customers know how to properly store away winter garments. They must be cleaned before storage -- that increases volume. Don't let salt damage from icy conditions sit on leather boots and coats for a prolonged period of time. These hints will help drive business.

Company newsletters are great ways of letting your customers know that you are about their garments, you want to help them prolong the life of their fine fashions, and most importantly remind them of the services you can perform. The more opportunities you have to demonstrate your expertise -- the more apt you are to solidify that relationship. E-mails are the best word of mouth for your business. It is so easy for your customer to forward your information to their friends and associates. Your customers can help you promote your business.

NEFA has developed tools to help you create an e-mail marketing campaign. Call me for more information and we can help you get started: 800-442-6848 or e-mail me at peter@nefabricare.com.



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# NEFA Opposes CT Plan to Expand Sales Tax to Drycleaning and Laundry



IN AN EFFORT TO SOLVE A SIGNIFICANT BUDGET DEFICIT, DEMOCRATIC LAWMAKERS HAVE PRO-

POSED AN EX-PANSION OF THE STATE'S SALES TAX TO INCLUDE MANY SERVICES IN-

CLUDING DRYCLEANING AND LAUNDRY.

NEFA, together with the GHLDA and representatives of the CT Korean Drycleaners Association, recently provided testimony opposing the measure and highlighting the sever impact this could have on our industry -- and our customers.

"We are categorically against this measure," offered Peter Blake, NEFA's Executive Vice President, "and we are taking steps to stop this unfair tax. NEFA has developed a position paper, we have been in contact with Senator John Kissel's office, and we provided testimony at the Republican Party's Public Hearing on May 11th."

NEFA is encouraging all drycleaners to contact their state law makers and voice your opposition to the new tax proposal. A complete copy of NEFA's talking points can be found on NEFA's website: www.nefabricare.com.

NEFA also strongly urges all members to sign the No New Taxes Petition, and to encourage YOUR CUSTOMERS to do the same. We have developed a flyer you can use to inform you customers, and have also provided a link on the Association's webpage. There is also a link to the "No New Taxes" Pledge Petition that you can forward to your customers and your employees. The more people that sign on, the more their voices will be heard.

NEFA will be following this closely. Please contact us if you have any comments, questions or concerns.

## NEXT DECD MEETING SET

In related news, the next semi-annual Industry/ DECD informational summit regarding the CT Clean-Up Fund will be held on July 15. DECD will host information meetings twice per year to provide updates to the industry on the administration of the dry cleaning fund as well as to gather input and feedback from the industry. The meeting will be held Wednesday, July 15, 2015 from 4 to 6 p.m. at DECD's offices at 505 Hudson Street in Hartford (Room 466).



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