

Los Altos Cleaner Adopts Wet Cleaning and Carbon Dioxide Technologies

Aqua Cleaners opened in Los Altos in November, 2007. Several dignitaries, including the Mayor, attended the Grand Opening event on December 6. The new facility is located in an upscale shopping area which includes an organic market as an anchor.



The cleaning facility is owned and operated by Kati Heilmann and Yasmina Das. Ms. Heilmann's family owned a textile cleaning shop when she was growing up. The owners decided to use the most environmentally friendly technologies for this new facility. "We wanted to set an example for the industry by using environmentally preferred methods of cleaning," says Ms. Heilmann.

Aqua Cleaners has two cleaning systems and provides laundry services as well. The professional wet cleaning equipment is an aqueous process for cleaning the full range of garments. "It relies on biodegradable detergents and additives," says Ms. Heilmann. The equipment can be programmed and customized for specific fabric types. "It is an extremely gentle cleaning method but it can also be used for heavily soiled fabrics," says Ms. Heilmann.



The facility also has a carbon dioxide dry cleaning system. The carbon dioxide comes from natural sources and is a by-product of industrial processes. While being environmentally safe, carbon dioxide has excellent cleaning properties. It dissolves, dirt, fats and oils on all materials currently dry cleaned. Unlike all the other cleaning systems, carbon dioxide does not require drying with heat; as a result it is very gentle on fabrics. Most important, carbon dioxide never leaves harmful residue or odor on garments.

"The carbon dioxide machine cleans the clothes using much cooler temperatures than traditional cleaning methods," says Ms. Das. "Finishing with carbon dioxide is significantly easier and our customers are impressed with the results of how their garments look and feel, especially the absence of chemical odor."

Ms. Das is committed to the high quality cleaning and the superior environmental profile of the wet cleaning and carbon dioxide methods. "We want to use the safest technologies for our employees and customers. We want to offer environmental stewardship to the community," she says.

