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## Pet Protection: Take These Precautions

By **Robert Kravitz** — posted 03/29/2010



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Carpet-cleaning technicians may need to practice added safeguards when cleaning carpets in buildings with high pet traffic, such as veterinarian offices and residential apartment buildings, according to a

report by the Marin Humane Society in Marin County, CA.

This is because animals can experience health problems if chemical residue is left in carpets after cleaning or chemical fumes become airborne.

For instance, dogs and cats may eat treats tossed onto carpets and then lick carpet fibers in search of crumbs, thereby running the risk of ingesting any chemical residue left behind after the cleaning process.

“Birds, in particular, can be very sensitive to airborne toxins and chemicals,” report Dr. Belinda Evans and Dr. Paul Breckenridge, both veterinarians, of the Marin Humane Society. “[Because of this], extra precautions should be taken when carpet cleaning in their environment.”

Evans and Breckenridge suggest that carpet cleaners use green cleaning products and recommend that pets be kept outside or boarded elsewhere while carpets are being cleaned.

### **Follow These Tips**

Nick Wiebe, marketing manager for U.S. Products, suggests these additional pet-safety tips for carpet cleaners:

- Use low-moisture extractors. Not only do these machines use less water, but they typically use less chemical as well.
- Select extractors that have received the “Seal of Approval” from the Carpet and Rug Institute (CRI). This program identifies carpet cleaning machines and tools that excel in performance and effectiveness.
- Select carpet cleaning chemicals that have been Green-certified by CRI or a similar respected certification organization.
- Pre-spray carpets; typically, less chemical is used in the cleaning process.
- Select heated carpet extractors. Such models increase the effectiveness of the carpet-cleaning chemicals, meaning less may be necessary.

“These steps can help reduce cleaning's impact on the indoor environment,” says Wiebe. “They make it safer not just for pets, but

for all living things.”



***A former building service contractor, Robert Kravitz is president of AlturaSolutions Communications, a Chicago, IL-based firm that provides corporate communication services to organizations in the jansan and building maintenance industries. He can be reached at [info@alturasolutions.com](mailto:info@alturasolutions.com).***

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