

# Carpet Maintenance

## CLEANING

Even though vacuuming can remove most of the dry soil, it is also necessary to clean your carpet on a regular basis to remove the oily, sticky soil that builds up in the pile as a result of cooking vapors, air pollution, and tracked in dirt. The particles of oily soil deposited on carpet fibers can cause gradual but significant dulling of delicate pastel colors; the color isn't lost but is hidden under the film. If this type of soil is allowed to accumulate, it begins to attract and hold the dry soil. This is the reason cleaning is so important when dulling of the color is first noticed; if allowed to remain too long, it becomes gummy and difficult to remove.

If carpet is cleaned before it becomes too unsightly, the cleaning chore will be easier and more successful. It is a myth that cleaning the carpet before it is absolutely necessary will cause it to get dirty faster. Carpet in a typical household should be cleaned every 12 to 18 months depending upon the number of residents and amount and type of activity.

Choice of the proper cleaning system is important. Some systems may leave residues which promote resoiling and defeat the whole purpose of cleaning. The recommendations below represent the best current knowledge and should help prolong the time between cleanings.

### The cleaning system

Shaw Industries recommends the hot water extraction system, which research indicates provides the best capability for cleaning. This system is commonly referred to as "steam cleaning," although no steam is actually generated. The process consists of applying a cleaning agent onto the pile and using water in the extractor to recover the used solution and soil. This can be done from a truck mounted unit outside the home with only the hose and wand brought inside or, where a truck mounted unit cannot reach, by a portable, self-contained system brought into the home.

### Professional carpet cleaners

It is to your advantage to use professional cleaners because their experience enables them to do a better job than you can do yourself. Their equipment has more extraction power than the rental units available to you, and the carpet should dry more quickly. True professionals have also made the investment in training to understand the equipment, to know the proper cleaning agents for the situation at hand, and to recognize the differences in fibers and carpet construction. One way to locate a professional cleaner is to contact the Institute of Inspection, Cleaning and Restoration Certification (IICRC) at 1-800-835-4624. This organization maintains a national directory of independent professional cleaners who are trained and certified in a variety of cleaning specialties. Call and explain that you have purchased a Shaw Industries carpet, and be sure to ask for a cleaner near you who uses the hot water extraction system.