



**NY GREEN**  
**GARMENT CLEANER**

# Guidance Document

## Introduction:

This guidance document will assist you in completing the garment cleaner application for membership in the New York Green Business (NYGB) program. It will explain in greater detail what the requirements are and provides resources that will help you meet these requirements. It follows the layout of the application itself.

If you have any questions about completing the application, or to learn if your garment cleaner meets the requirements, please contact the Pollution Prevention Unit at [nygb@dec.ny.gov](mailto:nygb@dec.ny.gov) or 518-402-9469.

## NYGB Participation Overview:

Applying to, and participating in, NYGB is voluntary and there is no cost to do so. To apply to the program, complete the application and ensure that it is physically or electronically signed by the garment cleaner owner, or their authorized party. Then submit the application by email to [nygb@dec.ny.gov](mailto:nygb@dec.ny.gov).

If accepted into the program, the garment cleaner will receive all of the benefits and privileges of being a member of NYGB. This includes being able to market the garment cleaner as an environmental leader (including use of the logo) and recognition from the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) (including one event at the garment cleaner if desired).

The garment cleaner must also complete an annual performance report (APR) and submit it by March 1st each year. This document can be found [here](#).

In addition, the garment cleaner will host a site visit by NYGB staff once during its three year membership period to verify that the garment cleaner meets the NYGB requirements and to provide resources to assist the garment cleaner in implementing sustainability and cost saving projects.

## Overall Application Tips:

- Be clear and concise in your responses.
- Remember that this is a public document and write your responses as if each of your customers will read them.
- Contact the [Pollution Prevention Unit](#) with any questions during the process

## The Application

### Section B: Background Information

Tell your story here to provide DEC with information about your operations that don't fit into other parts of the application. This information allows you to let the public know of all the great things that you are doing. Use this to let us know of any sustainability initiatives and projects that you are undertaking that go above and beyond the requirements of NYGB. While the focus of this program is on environmental sustainability, please include other information in this section such as charity work, community donations, and workforce initiatives as well if applicable.

Sample responses to these boxes are below:

1. Please give a brief description and history of the garment cleaner: (include information on size, services provided, and the community/neighborhood it is located in)

Cleaner X is a family owned cleaner that provides professional cleaning services for institutions and the public in Doeville. It has been in business since 1976 and serves the Doetown neighborhood. A majority of its customer base is community members and it also provides professional restoration services and cleans uniforms for the local college.

2. Please give a brief description and history of the garment cleaner's sustainability program and related initiatives: (include information on how the program began, what impact areas it covers, awards or honors won, previous and ongoing projects, participation in charitable work or donations, etc.)

Cleaner X has always prioritized cleaning garments in an environmentally friendly manner. It switched from perc to an alternative solvent in 2013 and in 2016 invested in professional wet cleaning equipment. It does as much cleaning in the wet cleaner as it can and uses an approved alternative solvent for the rest. It also offers customers the ability to use a reusable garment bag instead of plastic covering for transporting their order. It also purchased the most fuel efficient vans it can. It also offers free cleaning services to low income individuals for job interviews.

## Section C: Commitment to Compliance

To become a member of NYGB, a garment cleaner must be in compliance with all applicable federal, state, local, and tribal laws and requirements. When a garment cleaner applies to the program, DEC will conduct a compliance screening to ensure that they are in compliance. Details on the compliance check can be found in the general NYGB Guidance.

If you have had a minor violation in the past three years, this does not disqualify you from becoming a member of NYGB. Please fill in information on the violation and how it was corrected in the box on the application. If you have questions about whether or not you meet the compliance criteria to join NYGB, please contact the [Pollution Prevention Unit](#).

A sample response is below:

If you are currently not in compliance, have a question about a requirement, or have had any minor violations within the past three years, please describe below:

Cleaner X had was cited for not properly maintaining records in 2015. The violation was corrected and the cleaner is now in compliance

## Section D: Garment Cleaning Process Requirements

### 1. No perchloroethylene (perc) use

Garment Cleaners in NYGB are NOT to use perchloroethylene for either their dry cleaning process or for ANY spot cleaning.

### 2. Use exclusively wet cleaning or wet cleaning and dry cleaning using an approved alternative solvent

Garment cleaners in NYGB must have, and use, professional wet cleaning machines in their shop.

- If you utilize ONLY professional wet cleaning and do not have dry cleaning equipment in your shop then you can check box A to signify that you meet this requirement.
- If you utilize a mixture of professional wet cleaning and dry cleaning using an approved alternative solvent, then check box B. You must have at least 25% of your total business by sales value be professional wet cleaning to meet this requirement. In the text box, state the percentage of your business that is professional wet cleaning. Also state the approved alternative solvent that is used in your dry cleaning equipment.

A list of DEC approved alternative solvents can be found [here](#).

See below for a sample response for the part B box below:

If B, please list the percentage of the garment cleaner's business by value that is wet cleaning and the alternative solvent that you use.

45% of Cleaner X's business is wet cleaning and it uses Solvent XYZ as its alternative solvent.

### **3. No perchloroethylene (perc), trichloroethane (TCE), or n-propyl bromide (nPB) for spot cleaning**

Garment cleaners in NYGB are required to NOT use perc, TCE, or nPB for spot cleaning.

## **Section E: Other Requirements**

### **1. Written Sustainability Statement**

Having a written sustainability statement makes both your customers and employees know that your garment cleaner is serious about lowering its environmental footprint. The statement will create a culture of sustainability in communities as people see this choice as important to area businesses and community residents.

For the purposes of this requirement, a sustainability statement is a written statement that affirms the garment cleaner's commitment to lower its environmental footprint and operate in a more sustainable manner. There are no requirements for length of the statement. It must be communicated to employees and customers as part of the garment cleaner's public outreach.

### **2. Key Metric Tracking System**

You can't manage what you don't measure. This is why NYGB has a requirement that garment cleaners have a tracking system in place so that you can see exactly how many resources you are using and what it is costing. This also allows you to monitor for trends and outliers and make corrections. For example, it could help you locate a leaking valve when you see that water consumption is increasing.

Members of NYEL must have a system in place to track the following:

- Electricity Usage
- Water Usage
- Gas Usage
- Waste Generation

For the purposes of this requirement a metric tracking system is any written system (spreadsheet, software, etc.) that you use that tracks the garment cleaner's monthly electricity use, water use, gas use, and waste generation. This information can be found on utility bills. It is not required to report these metrics to DEC to be a member of NYGB, but the garment cleaner will need to show that they have the system in place during the NYGB site visit and may be required to share them if requested.

### 3. Recycling the following items

Cleaners must have a recycling system in place that covers the following items:

- Plastics
- Paper/Cardboard
- Glass
- Metals
- Electronics
- Ink Cartridges
- All other items required by law

Cleaners will be expected to describe and demonstrate how they recycle these products during their NYGB site visit. They are also encouraged to minimize their use of batteries and to recycle any batteries that they may use. More information on this can be found [here](#).

### 4. Sustainability Communications and Employee Training

*Communications:* As a sustainability leader, you are expected to clearly communicate your commitment to sustainability to your customers and employees. This includes receiving feedback on any environmental related issues that they may find or have with your operations. You may choose to meet this requirement by utilizing the communication and feedback mechanisms that you prefer, such as your website, comment cards, your Facebook or other social media pages, white boards in the cleaner, etc.

*Employee Training:* Your employees are the ones who ultimately will determine whether your sustainability initiatives are a success as they will be carrying them out. This means that proper training is essential to making sure that they not only are capable of carrying out all aspects of the sustainability initiatives (correctly sorting recycling, utilizing certain cleaning methods, and not using more resources than necessary), but that they take pride in sustainability as well. You may choose to utilize the training method and time line that you prefer to meet this requirement. For example, training all new hires when they join, providing yearly refresher training to all employees, designating a sustainability team lead that conducts these trainings, and conducting special trainings when new initiatives are launched. There is no defined training program or time line for this requirement.

A sample response is below:

Please describe your sustainability communications and employee training below:

Cleaner X has its sustainability statement on its website and posted in its lobby. It trains all staff on its sustainability program, including how to recycle properly and to offer customers reusable garment bags. It also trains all new hires on sustainability and provides a yearly refresher training to all staff.

## **Additional Resources**

[NYGB Guidance](#) - Provides general information on the NYGB program, including information on compliance criteria.

[NYGB Website](#) - Provides information for NYGB members, including forms such as the Annual Performance Reports (APRs) and important dates. Also features a listing of all current NYGB members.

[Energy Star](#) - Provides information and a listing of products and appliances that meet Energy Star criteria.

[Water Sense](#) - Provides information and a listing of products that meet Water Sense criteria.

[GreenNY](#) - Provides information on purchasing green products and operating in a more sustainable manner. Includes tools necessary to start a green purchasing program, including specifications for products.

[Green Seal](#) - Provides information on the Green Seal certification program and a listing of products that are certified, including cleaning products.

[UL EcoLogo](#) - Provides information on the EcoLogo seal and a listing of products that meet it, including cleaning products.

[Commissioner's Policy 67](#) - The policy that authorizes DEC to operate the NYGB program. Outlines how DEC will operate the program.