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Cleanlink News 7/31/2012

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## How Much Do You Know about pH?

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The term pH is heard frequently in the professional cleaning and carpet cleaning industries. However, many cleaning workers are not totally sure what pH is or how it effects cleaning. CFR encourages cleaning workers to take the following "CFR pH Quiz" to learn more about pH, promote worker safety, and improve overall cleaning effectiveness. (Answers are below.)

- What does pH stand for?
  - potential hydrogen
  - proton hydrogen
  - potential harm
  - both A and B
- What does the 14-point pH scale measure?
  - The amount of hydrogen concentration in a cleaning solution.
  - The acidity of a cleaning solution.
  - The balance of acid and alkalinity in a cleaning solution.
  - Both B and C
- A pH concentration of 3 in a cleaning solution indicates the product is?
  - very acidic
  - very alkaline
  - relatively neutral
  - relatively strong
- Food and tomato juice, both organic soils, were spilled on a customer's carpet. The best way to clean the carpet is with a cleaner having?
  - a high pH
  - a low pH
  - a neutral pH
- Sometimes we hear the expression buffering when referring to pH. What does this term mean?
  - The chemical has become weaker due to time or changes in its mixture.
  - The chemical maintains its pH even if the solution has been slightly altered.
  - The chemical is mixed with acids and alkaline ingredients to become more potent.
  - None of the above.
- True or false: When in doubt about a stain, always use a cleaning chemical with a low pH because it is safer?
  - True
  - False

According to Doug Berjer, Product Manager for CFR, when removing spots and stains from carpets and upholstery, along with using chemicals with the correct pH, it is very important to rinse the area clean with pure water. "Rinsing helps remove any chemical residues [left in the fibers] that can eat away at the fabric after cleaning is completed."

Answers:

- D
- D
- A
- A high pH (Food spills are often acidic; they are best cleaned using an alkaline cleaner which has a high pH)
- B. The chemical maintains its pH even if the solution has been slightly altered.
- B. False (low pH is more acidic and can harm certain fabrics and carpets)

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