

## A Breakthrough for the Australian Cleaning Industry!

### SPRUCE OBTAINS GOOD ENVIRONMENTAL CHOICE AWARD!

Agar Cleaning Systems is proud to announce the issuing of a Good Environmental Choice Licence for our **Spruce** detergent under the standard GECA 17-2007 - Cleaning Products. This follows an exhaustive process including the submission of suitable evidence, site-assessment, audit and verification.



Introduced in our last edition, Spruce is a hypo-allergenic\*, water-based cleaner that contains no perfumes, no solvents and no toxic ingredients, and is free of volatile organic compounds, so it produces the lowest possible impacts on both people and the environment, whilst facilitating highly effective and productive cleaning.

Spruce is an all-purpose cleaner that rapidly penetrates and removes light to medium soil loads from all washable hard surfaces. Depending on the dilution ratio, Spruce can be used for mopping floors, wiping desks and benches, and even cleaning bathroom fixtures.

#### Why is a Good Environmental Choice Licence important?

Good Environmental Choice Australia (GECA) is an independent, not for profit, public company, and is a member of the Global Eco-labeling Network. The GECA label has become the national product environmental assurance certification that is well recognized in the building services sector.

So many companies are now making claims, often unfounded, that their products are 'green' or 'environmentally friendly', so much so that the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission has had to crack down on companies making such claims without substantiating evidence.

GECA's independent endorsement demonstrates to environmentally aware property managers and concerned product users that **Spruce** detergent is a cleaning product which has a demonstrably lower environmental impact than typical products in the category.

For those companies seeking an environmental certification for their own cleaning program, GECA approval means **Spruce** detergent is the logical choice cleaning product for inclusion in that program.



Some customers have already embraced **Spruce**, and have reported excellent results. One of the important things about an environmentally responsible cleaning product is that it must still be truly effective so that an excessive amount isn't used, and so that other resources such as energy and labour aren't wasted in the process.

Agar Cleaning Systems is committed to the creation of a sustainable cleaning industry, and will continue to develop and promote products with better environmental outcomes.

\* Formulated to minimise the risk of allergic reactions occurring in sensitive individuals.

Please visit [www.agar.com.au](http://www.agar.com.au) for more information.

## 40 YEARS OLD, STILL YOUNG!

May 1, 2008 marked the fortieth anniversary of the incorporation of J.R. Agar Chemicals Pty Ltd. Ross Agar started things off in his garage on a mission to make excellent floor waxes and maintenance products, and demonstrate to a young contract cleaning industry just what they could do.

The last forty years have been interesting to say the least. What may appear on the outside as steady growth and expansion into a national organisation masks all of the highs and lows, let-ups and let-downs, and ventures and misadventures that I guess most enduring businesses experience.

We are proud of what the business has become, and the way we have always done business with integrity and the aim of making our customers more successful in their businesses. It's really been all about people and products, and doing the job.

We wish to thank our staff members over the years, our many loyal customers and friends present and past, as well as our distributors and suppliers for showing faith in the company and playing their part in getting us to where we are now.

Sadly, Ross is no longer with us, but we're sure he would be very pleased to see that we're still coming up with new ideas, still working with our customers and solving their problems, and still having fun!

## NEW ARRIVALS!

### TIMBERTECH

#### Premium quality polyurethane sealer for sanded timber floors.

The superior polyurethane plastic polymers in TIMBERTECH impart extreme toughness and high gloss, making it a very resilient hard-wearing finish, ideal for gymnasium floors and also for high-traffic multipurpose halls. Other applications include classrooms, halls, hotels, offices, restaurants and private homes.

TIMBERTECH is water-based with safe ingredients, and contains no turpentine solvents, so it's low in odour and easy to apply.

TIMBERTECH seals and finishes all types of indoor wood including tongue-and-groove and floating timber, and cork floors to provide a clear

glossy, protective finish which enriches the colour of the timber. It seals the wood and protects the floor from any further water or spillage contact and abrasive foot traffic.

Films of TIMBERTECH have a high scuff-resistance and high chemical resistance.

Four to five coats will be needed for fully sanded floors, with 1 to 2 hours drying time between coats. Applying poly-urethane sealers to timber is a specialised process – please refer to the TIMBERTECH Product Data Sheet on [www.agar.com.au](http://www.agar.com.au) for more information.

(Drying time will vary with atmospheric conditions. Higher humidity or lower temperatures will slow the drying. TIMBERTECH should not be applied to very cold floors (below 9°C). If this is unavoidable, lay the coats thinly and allow extra time for them to dry.)

Available in recyclable 5L bottles.

Please contact your Agar Representative or call us for more information...



## RENEGADE Heavy Duty Detergent

RENEGADE is a bio-degradable water-based solvent cleaner that will find a use in all sorts of heavy-duty cleaning tasks, and is suitable for all washable hard surfaces.

**RENEGADE works where many other products fail, so it's a real problem solver.**

A powerful alkaline degreaser detergent, RENEGADE quickly dissolves greasy, oily and fatty soils as well as mud and soot, and removes the soil from floors, walls, ceilings, paintwork, sinks, cupboards, baths, showers, stainless steel, glass and porcelain, equipment, machinery, vehicle bodies, car and truck engine bays.

Because it's supplied in a concentrated form, you can select the right strength for the job. For example, 1 part RENEGADE in 4 parts water will quickly clean up machinery and BBQ's and even prepare dirty paintwork for repainting, whereas a 1:60 solution is ideal for regular mopping of workshop floors.

RENEGADE may be used in mop buckets, auto-scrubbers and steam cleaners, as well as by spray-and-wipe method.

Use RENEGADE only for tasks that demand it, and dispose of the used solution to sewer.

Please ask your Agar rep. or visit [www.agar.com.au](http://www.agar.com.au) for more information. RENEGADE is available in 5L containers.

### Why another HD detergent? Aren't there enough already?

Well, as many will know, cleaning is more complicated than it first seems.

The many, many substances which present as soilage respond differently to the wide range of chemical compounds available to us for formulating cleaning products.

It's a bit like designing the right key (ingredients) for a particular lock (soil).

Complicating things is the wide variety of surfaces from which the soil needs to be removed, starting with ceramic tiles which can vary in porosity, and going on from there.

It's uncanny how one detergent will work better here, while another will work better there. Sometimes, the very thing that makes the detergent work better in one application may hinder its performance in another use.

That's why it is best to seek advice from your Agar representative when you're not getting the result you need or you're not sure which detergent to use.

In the meantime we are trying to rationalise our range with ongoing research seeking to further improve the performance and versatility of our products.

## TRUTH AND LIES ABOUT CHEMICALS: MSDS

Sadly we have been made aware of some unethical manufacturers who claim some of their products to be **non-hazardous** when, if assessed using the technical data provided on their own corresponding material safety data sheet (MSDS), they really are **hazardous**.

What's the problem here? If the manufacturer states that information then shouldn't they be held liable? Well, a couple of things.

Who holds the duty of care to the cleaning staff and the selection of suitable materials for use in their workplace? I would suggest the employer of the cleaning staff. It is the employer who must provide a safe workplace for their employees.

And who will be held responsible for damage to surfaces in the property by harsh chemicals which removed the soil, but changed the nature of the surface in the process? I would suggest the cleaning company which elected to use that product for that purpose.

The accompanying table has been prepared to assist you in checking the validity of the MSDS, understanding the hazard presented by the product and determining whether a product really is non-hazardous, assuming the physical data is factual.

Maintaining files of MSDS may seem like a burden, but if you read them carefully and know what to look for, they can assist you in making better product selections and improving the safety of your cleaning staff.

#### 1. Check the issue date

Must be less than 5 years old. Must be in 16-section format.

#### 2. a) Check Part 2 Hazards Identification

Is product Hazardous or Not Hazardous? (according to NOHSC)

#### b) Check for the Hazard Category

This is a word and symbol such as; **Very Toxic T<sup>+</sup>** - very poisonous

**Irritant Xi** - may cause redness & irritation

**Corrosive C** - may cause burns & skin destruction

**Harmful Xn** - may be bad for health

**Toxic T** - Poisonous, bad for health, may be carcinogenic (cancer-causing) etc.

#### 3. Check Part 9 what is the pH of product (not a solution of the product)?

If the pH is above 11.5 it should be classed as corrosive (alkaline).

If the pH is below 2 it should be classed as corrosive (acid).

If this is so, the product is Hazardous, and a Risk Assessment should be carried out.

#### 4. Check Part 4 First Aid Measures

Check what needs to be done if someone has an accident & needs First Aid.

#### 5. Check Part II Toxicological Information. Look at Health Effects (Acute) on Eyes.

If product may cause irritation or damage to the eyes, it should be considered as Hazardous.

#### Look at Health Effects (Acute) on skin.

If product may cause irritation or damage to the skin, it should be considered as Hazardous.

#### 6. Check Part 9 Flash Point

If the Flash Point is below 60.5°C (closed cup) or below 65.6°C (open cup), then the product is **FLAMMABLE Class 3 Dangerous Goods**.

#### 7. Check the Risk Statements (for example R10, R36, R41 etc.) and Safety Statements (for example S26, S45, etc).

These statements summarise the main risks and precautions you need to take.

#### 8. Check Part 8 Exposure Controls / Personal Protection

Look under 'Personal Protection'. This will tell you if staff using the product need safety glasses, gloves, or other protective gear.

Please contact your Agar Representative or call us for more information...