

Agar Cleaning Systems - Chemical manufacturer with a conscience.

Environmental Sustainability

Agar is serious about Environmental Responsibility - we take a real-world approach to keeping our overall environmental impact to an absolute minimum within the context of a commercially viable operation. We aim to be a sustainable enterprise well into the future.

Consistent with our Company Mission

Our mission is to supply our customers with the cleaning products, systems and services they need to most effectively, productively and economically achieve their goals in terms of hygiene, cleanliness, aesthetics, safety and environmental care.

To ensure the long term survival of Agar Cleaning Systems, our operation must be sustainable and through our products and services, we must promote sustainable operations within our client's organizations.

Cleaning is a labour intensive activity; using the most effective products allows cleaning tasks to be completed in less time, saving labour hours and energy use, benefitting cleaning service providers and their clients. More effective products are used in smaller quantities on any given task, combining to reduce the consumption of resources and energy in their production and distribution.

As a responsible corporate citizen, the achievement of our goals must be consistent with minimizing environmental impact, and ensuring the safety and well-being of cleaning staff and all stakeholders.

Recognizing The Environment in Everything We Do

At Agar, we are aware of all of the implications surrounding the use of chemicals. Minimizing environmental impact and maximising performance must occur in parallel. Agar takes the view that all products used according to instructions should present the minimum possible risk to the environment.

Clearly the prevention of environmental pollution is paramount; our efforts must extend to the efficient and minimized use of energy, water and other resources, and minimizing waste.

Product developments

Agar Cleaning Systems' commitment to using the safest raw materials continues to yield benefits to environmental friendliness, as does our avoidance of any toxic substances which are known to be life-threatening or permanently damaging to the environment.

Where practical, Agar products are formulated in concentrated form to reduce freight and fuel costs. All products conform to all statutory environmental requirements and our aqueous formulations are biodegradable. A high rate of biodegradability is a key selection criterion for our surfactants.

Optimized Efficacy = Environmental Efficiency

We have a strong belief that if cleaners use the most effective products within the confines of environmental responsibility, then less will need to be used. This has flow on benefits in terms of the reduction in energy used to manufacture products as well as a lower volume of waste material after use.

In a cleaning process, higher chemical efficacy reduces the reliance on mechanical action and heat, thereby reducing the energy demand of the process.

Natural Alternatives

Where practical or critical in sensitive effluent situations, we do not use phosphates and continue to increase the use of natural, re-growable organic raw materials. This move is reflected in new-generation products like **Citra-Mist, Fresco, Sequal, pH-7, Citrus Extra, Citrus Spotter, Shower Star and Spruce**.

Spruce, awarded the 'Environmental Choice Australia Mark by GECA (see below) is an effective all purpose cleaner formulated to have the lowest possible impact on people and the environment. As well as being highly biodegradable, based on re-growable ingredients and completely non-toxic, it is hypo-allergenic, minimising the possibility of allergic reactions occurring in sensitive individuals.

Minimizing toxicity at all levels

We are mindful that before we replace an existing ingredient with a so-called 'green' replacement, we must verify that there are no undesirable side-effects. Such a replacement may still present some hazards to the product user, as many plant-derived substances are very harmful to human health. The green replacement may need to be used in a much higher concentration to achieve the same cleaning results. Consequently the cleaner may be exposed to a higher level of toxicity, and/or an excessive amount of this substance will be present in the waste solution. An excess of any material, whether mineral or plant in origin can still present an imbalance to an ecosystem.

Independent Verification

Whilst we can provide strong technical evidence to support our environmental claims, we believe independent verification is important to add credibility and give our product users extra piece of mind.

This is why we have selected the 'Environmental Choice Australia Mark' an Australian standard awarded by Good Environmental Choice Australia (GECA) for products which benefit the environment by reducing impacts as the benchmark.

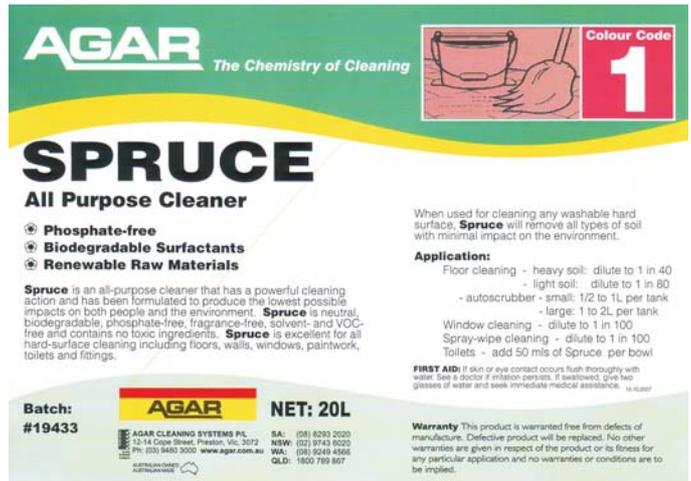
In addition to Spruce, Agar's pH-7 All purpose Cleaner, Citra-Mist Surface Spray, Sequal Toilet Cleaner and Fresco All-over Bathroom Cleaner have all earned the 'Environmental Choice Australia Mark'.

Work continues to expand our range of environmentally endorsed products.

Features of the Agar product range that promote environmental sustainability are:

- ♦ High biodegradability is a key criterion in surfactant selection and product formulation.
- ♦ Use of plant derived, renewable-source ingredients where practical. Research and development continues in this area.
- ♦ Concentrated products with a considerable capacity for dilution, to guarantee performance and save on transport cost and energy usage, and storage space.
- ♦ Versatility to reduce the number of products in use at any specific site.
- ♦ Simple, understandable colour coded cleaning range for all daily cleaning tasks. This prevents confusion so that products are used and disposed of correctly.
- ♦ Consistently high quality and effectiveness so that there is no need to use excessive amounts of product.
- ♦ Ongoing research and development into better choice of ingredients and methods.

Whilst the Agar range is diverse, it offers many versatile products that allow customers to purchase a compact range so that inventories are kept to a minimum. This versatility, combined with effectiveness makes cleaning faster and easier with longer lasting results. The bottom line is optimum cost-effectiveness of cleaning labour.



ACS-2009
GECA 17-2007 –
Cleaning Products

Products that promote environmental sustainability through reduced environmental impact:

PRODUCT	PICTURE	PURPOSE	ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFIT
<p>pH-7</p>  <p>ACS-2009 GICA 17-2007 Cleaning Products</p>		<p>A pH neutral detergent which effectively cleans all types of floors as well as other resilient surfaces.</p>	<p>Non-caustic and phosphate free. Containers can be recycled. Low VOC content. No toxic, carcinogenic or bioaccumulative ingredients. No endocrine disruptors, mutagens or teratogens. Contains readily biodegradable surfactants, both aerobically and anaerobically.</p>
<p>Spruce</p>  <p>ACS-2009 GICA 17-2007 Cleaning Products</p>		<p>A mild neutral detergent which effectively cleans all types of hard surfaces. It is hypo-allergenic and promotes good indoor air quality. Absolutely no solvents or fragrances.</p>	<p>Highly biodegradable, phosphate free, surfactants derived from naturally renewable, regrowable resources. Containers can be recycled. Zero VOC content. No toxic, carcinogenic or bioaccumulative ingredients. No endocrine disruptors, mutagens or teratogens. Contains readily biodegradable surfactants, both aerobically and anaerobically.</p>
<p>Citra-Mist</p>  <p>ACS-2009 GICA 17-2007 Cleaning Products</p>		<p>Highly effective and fast working spray & wipe cleaner which dissolves and removes soilage from all hard surfaces. Phosphate free.</p>	<p>Low VOC content. Containers can be recycled. No toxic, carcinogenic or bioaccumulative ingredients. No endocrine disruptors, mutagens or teratogens. Fragrance produced and used in accordance with Code of Practice of 'International Fragrance Association' (IFRA). Contains readily biodegradable surfactants, both aerobically and anaerobically.</p>
<p>Fresco</p>  <p>ACS-2009 GICA 17-2007 Cleaning Products</p>		<p>All-purpose washroom cleaner with citrus-based fragrance.</p>	<p>Biodegradable, all natural, renewable ingredients, no phosphates or inorganic acids. Low VOC content. Containers can be recycled. No toxic, carcinogenic or bioaccumulative ingredients. No endocrine disruptors, mutagens or teratogens. Contains readily biodegradable surfactants, both aerobically and anaerobically.</p>
<p>Sequal</p>  <p>ACS-2009 GICA 17-2007 Cleaning Products</p>		<p>A powerful, non-hazardous toilet and urinal cleaner.</p>	<p>Biodegradable, no phosphates. Low VOC content. Containers can be recycled. No toxic, carcinogenic or bioaccumulative ingredients. No endocrine disruptors, mutagens or teratogens. Contains readily biodegradable surfactants, both aerobically and anaerobically.</p>
<p>Shower Star</p>		<p>A concentrated bathroom cleaner containing naturally occurring mildew and mould killers.</p>	<p>Biodegradable, no phosphates. Low VOC content. Containers can be recycled. No toxic, carcinogenic or bioaccumulative ingredients. No endocrine disruptors, mutagens or teratogens. Contains readily biodegradable surfactants, both aerobically and anaerobically.</p>
<p>Tango</p>		<p>With strong floral-candy perfume, Tango Disinfectant cleans, kills germs & deodorizes.</p>	<p>Biodegradable surfactants and phosphate-free. Low VOC content. Containers can be recycled. No toxic, carcinogenic or bioaccumulative ingredients. No endocrine disruptors, mutagens or teratogens. Contains readily biodegradable surfactants, both aerobically and anaerobically.</p>
<p>Citrus Extra</p>		<p>A natural pre-spray liquid detergent for HWE carpet cleaning. It is low alkaline, low foaming and free rinsing. Safe to use on all carpets.</p>	<p>Biodegradable, phosphate-free. Low VOC content. Containers can be recycled. No toxic, carcinogenic or bioaccumulative ingredients. No endocrine disruptors, mutagens or teratogens.</p>
<p>Citrus Spotter</p>		<p>Dissolves and removes spots and marks. Can be used on most types of hard and soft surfaces, carpets, upholstery and most plastics.</p>	<p>Biodegradable, all natural regrowable feedstock and phosphate-free. No toxic, carcinogenic or bioaccumulative ingredients. No endocrine disruptors, mutagens or teratogens.</p>

Dispensing & Dilution Control

The use of more concentrated chemical products can have benefits environmentally by reducing freight loadings and therefore carbon emissions.

It is important that cleaning chemical concentrates be diluted correctly to achieve the intended level of performance and prevent over use of product which is wasteful, increases expenditure, and increases the risk of 'un-neutralized' chemicals passing through to the environment.

Agar Cleaning Systems can provide a range of simple dispensing options from inexpensive hand pumps which deliver a measured dose of concentrate, to automatic dilution systems that provide ready-to-use solutions at the correct ratio at the push of a button.

Agar's products and dispensing systems still provide the option of fine-tuning the dilution rate to specific site and process requirements to ensure optimal productivity and results.



Re-Use and Re-Cycling of Packaging

We are active in collecting empty containers for washing which reduces the consumption of energy and raw material required to produce new containers. Where this is not viable, recycling reduces the amount of plastic sent to landfill waste disposal. All packaging is made of recyclable materials.

Dispenser bottles reduce packaging 'thrown away'

Another safety initiative which has environmental benefits is our range of re-usable printed dispenser bottles. Ready to use solution is prepared in, or dispensed into these colour coded bottles for use on the job. When depleted they can be washed and re-filled using product supplied in concentrated or bulk form. This makes for more efficient transportation and reduces waste that would result from more efficient transportation and reduces waste that would result from consumer type packaging being discarded once depleted.



Evolving Product Range

The Agar Cleaning Systems product range caters for virtually any cleaning task, with each product formulated to the highest levels of performance and manufactured to strict quality standards. Agar products are designed to achieve high productivity in combination with the latest cleaning equipment and methods, with minimum environmental impact.

We continue to develop and refine our products as we gain more knowledge into, and receive information from our suppliers about the bio-degradability and potential toxicity of raw materials.

Aided by liaison with chemists from the world's leading raw material producers and extensive fieldwork, we continue to explore:

- ♦ Further opportunities for the replacement of petrochemicals with renewable plant-derived and environmentally suitable raw materials.
- ♦ Formulation of non-hazardous products or as many cleaning tasks as possible and products which facilitate more energy saving and water wise cleaning processes.

Training

Education in the most effective use of products with reduced environmental impact will facilitate the best outcome. In some cases cleaning staff will be introduced to new products. In our experience these staff will approach such change more positively and achieve better outcomes after receiving training about why such change is needed and how to use the new products.

Agar Cleaning Systems offers training to the staff of client organizations which is aimed at promoting safer use of chemical products and achieving the best results. We educate cleaning operators on how to get the most out of our products so that the full potential can be achieved and environmental impact minimized through correct application, minimized waste and correct disposal of expired or soiled solutions.

Technical Support

The Agar Technical team includes graduate chemists and engineers with many years of experience in cleaning products formulation, manufacturing and application. All are actively engaged in the usage and appraisal of Agar products and they contribute materially to the collective innovation and development of new methods and products incorporating reduced environmental impacts. They are available to provide assistance with problem solving and specifying products for unusual applications.

Process and Waste Control

Agar Cleaning Systems must continue to strive to prevent pollution and use energy and resources as efficiently as possible. Our formulations and production processes are designed to use energy efficiently and minimize waste of unused raw material, excess or faulty product and packaging. We have implemented measures to prevent any traces of constituents or final product being passed out to the environment. Our effluent treatment process and Trade Waste Agreement are critical elements in achieving minimum pollution levels.

All raw materials and finished products must be stored appropriately to prevent any spillage being passed out into the environment. This falls in line with our policy of storing all goods in accordance with Dangerous Goods Storage and Handling Regulations. Suitable equipment and procedures remain in a state of readiness to handle any emergency.



Reducing our Carbon Footprint

The more recent issue of climate change through global warming has brought our use of energy into much sharper focus. The emission of carbon dioxide and other gases through the burning of oil products, coal and other fuels is widely acknowledged as a cause of permanent change to the world's climate.

Agar Cleaning Systems is in the process of reviewing all activities which impact on energy usage and the emission of 'greenhouse' gases'. Our initiatives include:

- ◆ Implementation of energy efficient lighting in our offices, warehouses and production areas.
- ◆ Identifying and eliminating any unnecessary usage of energy. E.g. Switch off when not in use.
- ◆ Phasing in more fuel efficient fleet vehicles.
- ◆ Consolidation of freight loadings to reduce the number and extent of journeys.
- ◆ Producing concentrated products which reduce the amount of water that needs to be transported.

Whatever the impact on our climate, the more efficient use of energy will bring benefits both economically and to the environment by way of a cleaner atmosphere. We will continue to monitor developments with this issue as governments grapple with the introduction of viable ways of reducing emissions.

Continuing the Effort

Agar Cleaning Systems strongly embraces the concept of continuous improvement. Intensive research and development is ongoing, and new information from various local and international sources about safer raw materials and better cleaning practices is investigated in an effort to generate further improvements to products and processes to reduce environmental impact.

Feedback from staff and product users is encouraged to further assist in the improvement of refinement processes. Usually both the environment and the product user benefit simultaneously by any progress we make.

As a responsible manufacturer of chemical products and corporate citizen, Agar Cleaning Systems management and staff must always be mindful of the environmental consequences of both products and all aspects of company operations.

Involvement

We are keen to do our bit in reducing the environmental impact of cleaning operations. One of our representatives will be happy to meet with you to review your cleaning processes and identify areas where impact can be reduced.

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