

DON'T BE FOOLED!

How To Spot a Carpet Cleaning Scam

Like every industry, the carpet cleaning industry has its share of bad companies. Although the majority of the companies are honest, there are some that are looking to scam the consumer. This article will help you identify the unethical carpet cleaners and help you avoid getting ripped off by a scam.

BAIT & SWITCH

This is the classic carpet cleaning rip-off. In this scam, the customer is lured in by a ridiculously low priced carpet cleaning. Often the advertisement you read will offer carpet cleaning in the neighborhood of \$5 per room. There is no way that a company can be profitable selling its services that low. But the companies usually have no intention of leaving your home with only the advertised amount. So how do they increase the bill after you have taken the "bait" of the low price?

PRECONDITIONING SCAM

One way they will increase the bill is by selling you preconditioning. Most legitimate companies include this in their pricing. That low price they offered probably didn't include it. It may have been \$5 per room to clean it with water only but pre-conditioning will cost you an additional 25 cents per square foot. Considering an average room size of 150 square feet, that would be \$37.50 per room extra. So a 5 room home would go from the advertised carpet cleaning price of \$25 to \$212.50. Quite a difference.

But what if you just refuse to pay for the pre-conditioning? Chances are you will get a substandard cleaning or a rush job, but there is another way that they can try to force you into paying for the pre-conditioning. They may offer to do a demo for you. This isn't necessarily bad, many good carpet cleaning companies do demos. What Bait & Switch companies will do however is clean an area in a highly visible area. If you decide not to pay for the extra service, you will have an extra clean spot in the middle of your carpet that will stick out like a sore thumb. By doing this, you are forced to pay the extra price.

EXTRA ROOM SCAM

Another way for Bait & Switch companies to increase their bill is through extra room charges. If you use a coupon, you must read the fine print. Some companies will charge extra for rooms over 100 square feet of carpet for example. It is hard to find a room in a typical home under that square footage, so that means the typical room will count as two and the typical living room or family room will count as three or even four rooms.

PROTECTION SCAM

Almost all carpet cleaning companies offer protection at reasonable prices and carpet protectors themselves are good products. This doesn't become bait and switch until a company uses high pressure tactics. Customers may be told that their carpet will be ruined if they don't have protection applied. This is simply not true. Protection will certainly extend the life of your carpet and make future cleanings easier but it is in now way necessary.