

The Official Publication of the Society of Cleaning and Restoration Technicians

Society of Cleaning and Restoration Technicians

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CRI SOA Testing

by Werner Braun, President, Carpet and Rug Institute

In September of 2005, the Carpet and Rug Institute (CRI) gathered alongside NASA officials at Cape Canaveral and the John F.

Kennedy Space Center to officially launch the Seal of Approval (SOA) Testing Program. It was introduced with much pomp and circumstance inside a venue that has hosted some of this country's most anticipated launches (pun intended). And as one might suspect, it was one of CRI's proudest moments.

Please understand, however, that venue and distinguished guests aside, the real source of pride that day came from the down-to-earth ramifications this new SOA program would hold for the cleaning industry. After much hard work and seemingly countless hours, members of the carpet manufacturing and cleaning industries had put together a testing program that could truly distinguish good carpet cleaning products from the bad ones.

Over the last week or so, we've seen the CRI SOA Program placed back into the industry spotlight, as much has been said and written about it. From message board fodder to heart-felt letters and faxes, CRI has heard both the critical and informative comments, as well as those in support of what the SOA Program was and is meant to be.

As I've gone through the volumes of comments, there appeared to be five major sticking points for the comments, so I put them to paper and took them before CRI's Cleaning and Maintenance (C&M) Issues

Management Team (IMT) for review. They include:

- The issue of "orphaned" equipment, or rather, equipment that is no longer being made by the manufacturer, but is still being used effectively in the marketplace.

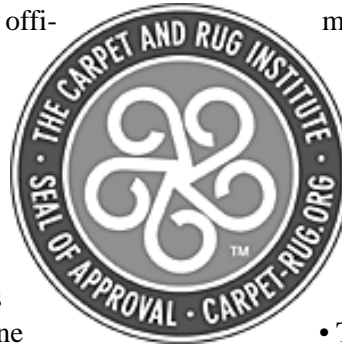
The issue of equipment that, for whatever reasons, has not been submitted for testing leaving the owner basically "orphaned."

- Rug Doctor's submission for testing and ensuing certification.
- The relationship between CRI, its members, warranties and IICRC.
- Test cost.

As with any program worth its salt, when we launched the SOA Program we knew that it was far from a finished product. All of our other successful signature programs have undergone an evolution and we certainly expected as much with the SOA. The CRI Green Label Program, for instance, has been tweaked and improved on four separate occasions, and each time we have done so for the betterment of the consumer.

That said, we have started to move in a direction that will best accommodate those machines that currently don't have a home in our program. We have looked at the data and it shows (as many of you have pointed out) there is no reason to believe a truck mount in good working condition would not pass our SOA test at some level.

From the beginning, the program has had a provision to cover private labeled equipment for a very small listing fee, if the original equipment manufacturer's (OEM's) unit has passed CRI SOA. Some manufacturers or private label vendors have chosen to embrace this, others apparently not - this





CRI SOA Testing *(Continued from Page 1)*
is an issue with the manufacturer of some cleaners' equipment.

As I write this, we have put together a committee to come up with a plan to provide an avenue for these "orphaned" machines to be included in the program. It's not set in stone, but likely this new "Grandfathering program" will entail the owner or manufacturer having to use SOA-approved chemicals along with an SOA-certified wand. A criterion is also being established to define "good working condition" for the truck mount and it could also be tagged to the program. All of this will be announced as soon as it is ironed out, but rest assured, CRI wants to do nothing more than lift the cleaning industry, not hamper it.

Orphans receiving bronze can still be individually tested IF the owner wants to be rated at a higher level for marketing purposes. We're also exploring options where a group of owners of orphaned equipment might get together and create a pool, and also share in the cost of the testing.

For the equipment that currently has an active OEM, but has not been submitted for testing, CRI will embark on a campaign to meet with these manufacturers to identify the questions they might have, and encourage them to step up to the plate and have their equipment tested. One of the lessons we have learned from the manufacturers who have participated in SOA equipment testing is that they have discovered ways to significantly improve their present equipment. Again, if cleaners have equipment in this category, they should be asking the manufacturer for some really good reasons why, rather than settling for empty rhetoric.

This program is a win-win for everyone.

Normally, I try to shy away from talking about an individual brand, but based on the number of inquiries about Rug Doctor I feel it necessary to address. First off, let me explain that the CRI SOA testing protocol for equipment is elegant in the fact that, while it can precisely measure the amount of soil removed from the carpet, it has absolutely no idea how to read the logo on the side of the machine being tested.

Every piece of equipment is tested exactly the same way: four passes using water only as the solution. If it removes 55-69% of the soil, it is awarded a bronze seal; 70-79% a silver seal; and 80% or more earns the gold seal. Rug Doctor tested some of its portable equipment and passed, earning the equipment a bronze-

level SOA. The numbers are what they are. The bigger question here is this: is 55% soil removal too low an entry-level threshold? Again, we will continue to look at what is best for the consumer and as I said before, we have raised the standard in the Green Label Program four different times.

When the Rug Doctor equipment was tested as a system it earned the gold-level SOA. The point is, that there are more than one testing programs for formulators or manufacturers to elect to have products tested under. I must admit that I do not fully appreciate the issue being raised about Rug Doctor. I was under the impression most professional cleaners are focused on the mid-to-upper-end market. Customers in those markets are far less likely to use a rental machine than those in the market for builder-grade carpet.

Finally, and I hate to be the bearer of bad news to the Internet conspiracy theorists, but CRI does not have a relationship with IICRC and/or the member mills when it comes to SOA or recommended service providers. Certain carpet mills have provided CRI with "their" recommended cleaning service providers and we publish them on our website for the consumer to find easily. One of our members have taken the additional step to start tying their warranties to periodic cleaning performed by IICRC Certified Firms starting in January, 2008. This seems to be a huge benefit for committed cleaning professionals.

Several CRI member mills started the New Year by tying warranties to the use of SOA certified chemicals and equipment. This is an individual mill-by-mill decision and CRI has intentionally stayed clear of it. It is, however, not all that surprising when you look at the history of how the SOA program came to be in the first place.

Over the last 10 years or so, the carpet industry witnessed a steady erosion of its percentage of the floor covering market. As the industry came to grips with the reasons behind this loss of market share, the CRI started working diligently to identify the reasons, so as to avoid or remedy them in the future. Market surveys were commissioned and the number one issue we identified about why people were de-selecting carpet was cleaning and maintenance. Previous surveys done by some trade magazines solicited input from retailers, who for years have listed installation as their top problem.

Obviously, consumers - our customers and



yours - have a very different viewpoint. "You can't clean and maintain carpet" was the overwhelming sentiment.

Of course, we, like you, know that carpet can easily be cleaned and maintained; but something is out there supporting that prevailing thought. What laboratory testing revealed was bad cleaning products as a major contributor to this consumer perception.

Initial tests of products purchased off supermarket and distributor shelves, showed less than a handful of the two dozen tested actually cleaned better than water. The CRI testing protocol identified problem products and it has literally moved that segment of the industry ahead by leaps and bounds. Products were reformulated by conscientious formulators and today, we know of over 100 that have been tested and can proudly say they are actually cleaning carpet and keeping it clean longer.

Of course, the real beneficiaries of the CRI chemical SOA program are professional cleaners, who now have better products, and consumers whose carpet stays clean longer. Win-win.

Shortly afterwards, NASA entered our lives with a nifty little device known as an x-ray fluorescence (XRF) scanner, which allowed us to measure exact amounts of soil - literally to the thousandth of a particle! Again, XRF testing provided a way to help differentiate good cleaning equipment from the bad, or at least to quantify equipment manufacturer advertising claims. I was quoted in an article recently as saying I didn't understand why cleaning service providers hadn't wholeheartedly embraced the SOA Program and I stand by that statement.

Responsible products manufacturers have listened to the CRI explain why consumers are deselectioning carpet as their floor covering of choice, and they have voluntarily submitted to testing to prove their claims, not only to carpet manufacturers but also to their professional cleaner customers. Some, however, are trying to incite cleaners into complaining about issues that affect manufacturers only, so that they won't have to prove their claims through independent testing.

The CRI SOA Program was instituted to lift the industry and to provide a way for those of you who are doing the right thing for your customers to benefit. Like I said before, we realize that the equipment is just one part of the equation, just as the right chemicals are. As far as the human element, there are good people out

there providing training leading to certification, and the need for CRI to enter that arena doesn't exist.

Some of our member mills have independently decided which cleaning service providers they want to recommend. But, I must repeat again, CRI has absolutely nothing to do with individual manufacturer warranty decisions about cleaning service providers, nor does our SOA Program attempt to make that designation.

The same thing is true with carpet warranties. Some of our member mills felt strongly enough that the SOA Program was providing such a significant benefit that they independently chose to tie portions of their carpet warranties to the use of these testing programs.

CRI has been out there beating the bushes for months now to let retailers know about the SOA Program just as our member mills have. We don't claim that our program is perfect, but it will continue to get better.

Certainly, the recent activities on the Internet have had some beneficial consequences:

CRI is aggressively dealing with the "orphan" extractor issue. And by the way, it has created an opportunity for some new folks to get involved in the process of improving the SOA program.

As they say, any publicity is good publicity. Clearly many more people are now aware of the CRI SOA program than before.

One final thing worth addressing has been the outcry over the cost of the SOA Program. The fee structure is set up to cover the cost of the tests, all of which goes to the independent lab doing the test, with only a small administration fee going to CRI. The nominal renewal fee for the extractor equipment is an administration fee, while the larger renewal fee in the chemical program covers annual random testing of 25% of all SOA-approved chemicals.

A few smaller chemical formulators have complained that testing favors larger formulators with deeper pockets. However, viewed from a marketing perspective, their investment in testing, when used in combination with the CRI SOA logo, is not only a way to generate more than enough revenue to cover the cost of testing, it's also a way for smaller formulators to become a much bigger one.

Through all of this, though, there is one thing that every carpet cleaner should realize: if people are not buying carpet because they don't think it can be cleaned, then ultimately, the





IICRC Appoints New Chairman

The IICRC Standards Chairman Barry Costa has announced the appointment of Jim Pearson as the new Chairman of the IICRC S520 Consensus Body. Mr. Pearson will oversee the final stages of completing the Second Edition of the IICRC S520 Standard and Reference Guide for Professional Mold Remediation.

Jim Pearson has been a member of the S520 Consensus Body since the beginning of the rewrite of the document. Mr. Pearson has chaired several Chapter Committees for the S520 including the Inspection and Preliminary Determination Chapter and the HVAC Chapter. He previously participated in the writing of the 1st Edition of the IICRC S520 and Co-chaired the Safety and Health Chapter. Mr. Pearson is the President and CEO of Americlean Corporation in Billings, Mont., a 28-year-old disaster restoration business serving residential, commercial, industrial and institutional clients.

“We are looking forward to Jim's leadership and working with him in the completion of the document,” said IICRC Standards Chair Barry Costa. IICRC President Ruth Travis expressed her gratitude to Jim for stepping up to the leadership position and for his considerable contribution to the Standard and S520 Committee. Cliff Grost of Multi-Maintenance in Chicago will continue to serve as the Vice-Chair of the IICRC S520 Committee.

IICRC Standards Consultant Larry Cooper stated, “The S520 Consensus Body has completed the Peer Review Process internally and the document is currently being reviewed by the editing committee. Jim's leadership will help the committee finalize the process of updating the information in the S520. The entire committee has done an outstanding job in bringing very valuable information to the committee meetings, updating the chapters and sections. The updates to the S520 will be very valuable for the mold remediation industry as a whole.”

Mr. Pearson is active in the industry and is involved in several industry organizations:

- Previously served on the Board of Directors of Association of Specialists in Cleaning and Restoration (ASCR)
- Past Chairman of the Certification Committee for the ASCRF (c-3 foundation) Currently the Co-Chair of the Environmental Institute for the Association of Specialists in Cleaning and Restoration, International
- Past Chairman of the Mechanical Systems Hygiene Institute
- Member of American Industrial Hygiene Association (AIHA) and Indoor Air Quality Association (IAQA).

His company is involved in:

- Decontamination, deodorization, dehumidification
- Mold remediation, HazMat abatement, • Clandestine drug/meth-lab clean-up
- Blood-borne pathogens control and trauma/crime scene cleanup
- Flood & fire restoration, demolition, full reconstruction, new construction
- IAQ Consulting, Project Design, Air • Sampling and Analysis
- Contents cleaning, restoration, transport and storage. ■

Interested In Joining A SCRT Chapter?

Michigan Chapter:

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Northeast Ohio Chapter:

Tom Sherman

330-262-0936

tomemtb@aol.com

Missouri-Kansas Chapter:

Mike Brummett

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carpetguy@sunflower.com

or Richard Chavez

785-232-3779

richardc@chavezrestoration.com

Georgia Chapter:

Bruce DeLoatch

(770) 729-7117

bruce@cleanerscoach.com

An SCRT Benefit That's Not Widely Recognized

By Gerald Szpak, Commercial Carpet Care and Michigan Chapter President

An SCRT benefit that is not expressly stated is the advantage of acquiring "friends in the business" who help each other in times of need. I recently enjoyed that one great unrecognized benefit which more than covered the cost of my annual dues for years to come!

Not long ago during a typical carpet cleaning job at one of my customer's home, my two-man crew was performing the service the customer had requested. While one tech was "on the wand," the customer was showing the crew leader an Oriental rug he and his wife had just purchased on their vacation in Bursa, Turkey. He was proud of the fact that they had spent all day watching rugs being hand woven and then they picked this particular one, only to have to spend quite some time bartering the price to half. \$15,000.00 later his wife signed the back of the rug to be ensured they were shipped the one they had purchased. Now, several weeks later it was now in his home.

Having just arrived the day before and still rolled up, my customer was very proud of the silk-on-silk area rug they'd acquired. As the crew finished the crew leader told the other tech to clean the entrance mat near the back door as a "freebee." He then went out to the truck to load. Upon returning a few moments later he found the beautiful, very expensive, 100% silk Oriental rug rolled out in the foyer . . . wet! At about the same time, the customer came around the corner of the hall and saw the "cleaned" rug. To say he was ticked off was an understatement! And being a building contractor, he was no stranger to words like ##! * * *#! !! XX* //@@!! And he used them, over and over.

At that point the crew leader tried his best to get the rug dried as quickly as he could and even left an air mover behind to help expedite the process. The next day when I returned to retrieve the blower and

apologize, the rug owners pointed out a few ripples in the center and on one edge of the rug. The husband was pleasant to me, and understood that "things happen" but in spite of that fact, he wanted the rug repaired or to be reimbursed for all their expenses regarding the rug. Unfortunately, as all hand knotted rugs are unique, an exact replacement was not possible. The more he and his wife talked about the rug and their trip to Turkey to purchase it, the more irate they got. I knew I was in trouble so I told him about one of my competitors who is well known for his expertise in Oriental rugs. Unfortunately, the owner refused to allow me to take the rug out of the house.

So long story short, this is where the SCRT comes in. I asked fellow member Brian Hanna to go out to the house and discuss the needed repairs with my customer. He was more than happy to help, asked me some questions and said he would call me back with the results of his inspection of the rug. I left Brian dreading the discussion I needed to have with my insurance agent about Bailee Insurance regarding "care, custody, and control" of customer's rugs.

I also thought how lucky I was to have met Brian. I had only seen him a few times at SCRT meetings, but had never talked to him about much other than carpet related things. I don't know him personally and yet he was friendly and helpful, and most of all understood what it was like to be in my shoes. That alone was reassuring. A lesser person could have "let me wither on the vine." He called a few days later to say everything regarding that silk rug had been fixed. As it turned out, it was the pad underneath the rug causing the problem. So he sold them a new one and he made MY customer happy! Yes, my competitor, and a fellow SCRT member, made MY customer happy and got me "off the hook!" Priceless!!!! ■

CRI SOA Testing (Continued from Page 3) professional cleaner's business will diminish. If carpet is not being sold and installed, the need for you to clean them no longer exists.

Bottom line, professional cleaners and the consumers they serve, are the primary beneficiaries of the CRI SOA chemical and equipment testing programs. ■





What is Bailee Insurance?

Like so many other businesses, Clean Cleaners holds its customers' possessions to work on. There are two forms of Bailee Insurance to protect those goods against fire, flood, and other perils.

With one type, the customer can collect for a loss of goods only if the business is found negligent. Although this may save the business from paying for situations out of its control, it may also lead to dissatisfied customers who want their goods back (or paid for) no matter who was at fault.

With the other type of Bailee coverage, the customer is compensated regardless of any fault on the part of the business. A business often finds that the good will this insurance engenders is worth its higher cost.

Covering Your Customer's Goods

Maybe your business involves the receipt of customers' goods. Dry cleaners receive clothes to clean, jewelers receive rings and watches to repair, upholsterers receive furniture and so on. Goods left by a customer create a bailment - in other words, a transfer of possession without a transfer of title. The bailee (person receiving the goods) has a duty to exercise reasonable care to protect these goods from harm. Businesses that hold the goods of others may choose from two types of insurance to protect bailed goods from damage or destruction by fire and other perils. Contracts for bailment can alter common legal rules about your responsibility for bailed goods, so read each contract!!

One type of policy covers the goods only if the business is legally liable for the loss. Generally, legal liability cases are based on negligence; if the loss is beyond the business's control (caused by flooding, for example), this kind of policy would not protect the client.

The second type of bailment coverage reimburses the customer (bailor) for a loss regardless of its cause. Since most people expect compensation for their goods even if destroyed by a fire, windstorm, or other peril beyond the bailee's control, the second type of coverage is popular among bailees. After all, what good is it to be found inno-

cent of legal liability if it costs you the good will - and the patronage - of your customers?

David G. Sayles Insurance Services
www.dsayles.com ■

Looking for Information?

As an SCRT member in good standing you have access to all these valuable and informative articles. They are available in the Member's Only section of the SCRT website. Go to www.scrthq.org and click on Member's Only. If you've lost your pass word, call headquarters at 800-949-4728. And we're adding new ones all the time.

- Vapor Barriers
- CDC Mold Report Aftermath of Hurricanes
- IICRC Technical Advisory on "In-Place" Drying
- Major Flooding To the Rescue! - Jeff Bishop
- Wood Decaying Fungi ? An Insight on Types and Roles in Wood Decay - Dr. Harriet Burg, EMLab Environmental
- Kawasaki Syndrome, Jeff Bishop
- OSHA Mold Bulletin: A Brief Guide to Mold in the Workplace- U. S. Department of Labor
- Cleaning up Blood/Body Fluids on Carpet, The Carpet and Rug Institute
- Investigation of Gas-Phase Ozone as a Potential Biocide - K.K. Foarde, D.W. VanOsdell, and R.S. Steiber
- Recommended Procedures for Disposal of Waste Water Resulting from On-location Cleaning and Restoration Services - International Society of Cleaning Technicians (ISCT).
- Total Building Cleaning Effectiveness Study
- Carpet, Moisture and Mold Study Mike Berry, Carey Mitchell, Kurt Bolden, Cass Walton, Karin Foarde, Rachel Adams, Sponsored by the Carpet and Rug Institute
- Filter Soiling - Jeff Bishop, Administrator, Clean Care Seminars, Inc.
- Are scented candles damaging your home? - Joe Frey
- Standard for Installation Specification of



- Commercial Carpet - CRI 104 - 2002 - The Carpet and Rug Institute
- Standard for Installation Specification of Residential Carpet - CRI 105 - 2002 - The Carpet and Rug Institute
- Housing characteristics, reported mold exposure, and asthma in the European Community Respiratory Health Survey Jan-Paul Zock, PhD, Deborah Jarvis, MD, Christina Luczynska, PhD, Jordi Sunyer, MD, and Peter Burney, MD, on behalf of the European Community - Respiratory Health Survey
- Mold: Cause, Effect and Response - Foundation of the Wall and Ceiling Industry
- Fungal contamination in public buildings: A guide to recognition and management - Federal-Provincial Committee on Environmental and Occupational Health
- Building Air Quality - A Guide for Building Owners and Facility Managers - U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
- Public & Occupational Health Risks from Exposure to Sewage Contamination - Eugene C. Cole, DrPH Department of Health Science, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah
- A Life-Cycle Cost Analysis of Floor Coverings in School Facilities - Jeff Bishop, Certification Board Chairman, Institute of Inspection, Cleaning and Restoration Certification, Vancouver, WA ■

“Niche” Marketing

by Ruth Travis, RL Seminars, Inc.

Ok! You've got the biggest, most powerful, super suckin., cleaning machine in town. You use the best cleaning solutions known to mankind, or at least that,s what you've been told. You,ve been to all the courses about carpet and upholstery cleaning. You,ve read all the industry-related magazines front to back. Your supplier has taught you all he knows about chemicals and procedures . . . so, you can handle anything procedurally that comes along. BUT WAIT! . . . No one's calling you this time of the year. Remember, taxes are due next month.

I guess you'll just have to wait until the next phone book comes out that features

your two-page, four-color ad that costs you \$2000 per month to run - right?

Wrong! Absolutely wrong! Sure, you,ll get a job or two from that ad, but how are you going to generate any sales in the meantime?

The biggest problem most of us have is not how to do the work, but how to get the work. Now don't get me wrong, using the proper equipment and chemicals, and having technical proficiency is very important. You certainly don't want to ruin a client's brocade sofa or void the warranty on their stain-resistant carpet. But, without sales you won't even have the opportunity to demonstrate your skills.

I'd like to recommend some basics regarding a simple marketing strategy that I use in my business. Target marketing, or as my friend Clint Townsend with Chemical Technologies, International calls it, “niche marketing!” Become a specialist in one or two services, such as spot and stain removal (including spot dyeing), and urine and odor control, and then market that service to anyone and everyone you can. It's a strategy that you can start right now and see results immediately! Your regular cleaning service will grow, too. Remember, around every spot, stain or discoloration, is a roomful of carpet and upholstered furniture for you to clean.

I'd like for you to forget about the mass media, such as the yellow pages, as your primary source for advertising cleaning services. I know this is hard! You think just because your competitor does it, you have to also. I'm not saying you shouldn,t place an ad in the phone book. You have to be in there for name recognition. I'm just saying your advertising money may be better spent elsewhere.

Remember, according to consumer surveys, most of your clients get your name through a referral, like a friend, neighbor or acquaintance - not the yellow pages. Concentrate your marketing effort and dollars on making direct contacts with that relatively small group of people who can send you most of your work.

The first group to “target” is your existing customers. They're the easiest to contact because they're already familiar with your service. Ask them for referrals or cre-



ate your own “word-of-mouth” advertising. Following a cleaning job, my secretary sends out cards or brochures to my customer’s neighbors saying “We just finished cleaning your neighbors fine furnishings . . . we’d like to offer the same service to you.” The city directory is the reference source used to locate their names and addresses. Some even list the occupations of the residents.

Hmmm! Good information to have, don’t you think? If you clean their home, wouldn’t it make sense to clean their office as well?

Several other sources of referrals are interior designers, real estate agents, property managers, insurance agents (even if you don’t perform water or fire restoration services), and carpet and furniture stores. Your own competition (chances are if you’re specializing in spot dyeing or even urine decontamination, he,s not a competitor) can be a great lead source, too. Specialty services take a lot of patience and practice . . . more time and effort than the average cleaner is willing to devote. Remember, that’s what makes you a specialist, right!?

Interior designers have already earned their clients trust, so when they recommend your company, you can be guaranteed a call from the customer. The next step is up to you.

Once you receive that call, set up an appointment to give an estimate in person before actually scheduling the service call. Most consumers who use interior designers expect a higher level of service from the companies they hire. Demonstrate this in your appearance and attitude. By making the effort to give a written estimate in clients, homes or offices, you,ll have an opportunity to develop a rapport with them as well as to discuss the additional services your company offers. These add-on sales of your specialties means more profit!

Real estate agents also can be a gold mine for you. Think about it. What do most people do before they move into or out of a house? Clean the carpet, right?

“Niche” Marketing will be continued in the next issue of The Monitor.

SCRT New Members

Clean Touch, Inc.

Rick Peterson
Moberly, MO
rick@cleantouch.net

Cleaning Edge

Bob Edgmond
Grain Valley, MO
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First Choice Cleaning

Kent Pollard
Zeeland, MI
kpollard@firstchoiceclean.com

Freedom Carpet Cleaning

Walter Walker
Oak Wood Village, OH

Stanley Steemer

William Lamb
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SCRT Scholarship Recipient

Crowning Touch Cleaning Consultants

Jeremiah Stover
CCTcourse @ Pembertons

CONNECTIONS
conference
AND EXHIBITION

May 3, 4 & 5, 2007
Clearwater Beach, Florida
AT THE HILTON CLEARWATER BEACH RESORT

General Membership Meeting
May 2 • 2:00-4:00 PM
888-881-1001
www.connectionsconvention.org
for more information