



# SAVING YOUR Treasures

*A Website about what you can do to protect and preserve the things of importance in your life*



## **Gerald R. Ford Conservation Center Nebraska State Historical Society**

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### **GUIDELINES FOR THE DRY CLEANING OF PREPARED HISTORIC TEXTILES**

The first step in dry cleaning a textile is to choose the best dry cleaner. Start by gathering recommendations from local museums, bridal shops, and individuals that have established relationships with local dry cleaners. Look for a dry cleaner that has on-site cleaning facilities and older equipment. The new machines are highly automated and it may be difficult for the operator have a great deal of control, as is needed with special projects. It is also a good idea to provide them with a copy of the following procedures.

#### **Dry Cleaning Procedures**

- Call and prearrange cleaning on a day with fresh solvent when sole runs can be made.
- Prepare the object for dry cleaning using standard protection methods and materials (The customer should do this prior to bringing the item in. Follow the guidelines for preparation in "Caring for Your Wedding Dress.")
- Immerse and soak the item for five minutes in the drum without tumbling.
- Turn the bundle over and soak for five more minutes without tumbling.
- Add a 0.5% charge of detergent.
- Soak for five minutes in the drum without tumbling.
- Turn the bundle over and soak for five more minutes.
- Dry through heating cycle up to 140°F for 12 minutes.
- Cool through cooling cycle to 45°F.

- Turn machine off to cool further for 12 minutes.
- Remove bundle from drum and take home or to the museum work area.
- Open the bundle and unpack the object for further cooling and solvent evaporation.
- House the object for storage or prepare it for exhibition.

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