

# Winning Combination

## Stain Removal a Smart Addition to a Retailer's Toolkit

When it comes to removing stains, Winning Brands takes the kid gloves off.

Actually, it doesn't need gloves at all. The Canadian company's flagship product, Winning Colours Stain Remover, has a take-no-prisoner approach to stain removal: It can be used to clean up a wide range of spills. But it doesn't use any harsh or smelly chemicals in the process, so users don't have to fuss with gloves or worry about harming their skin.

The versatility of this product and the ability to handle delicate and tough surfaces, packaged in a non-hazardous and environmentally friendly product, has been making waves among paint retailers and customers. It usually just takes one cleanup situation to prove why Winning Colours Stain Remover should be a staple in any paint department, and certainly in the truck every time a painting professional goes out on a job.

### STRONG SELLING POINTS

As every professional painter has likely found out, messes are just part of the job. A bucket of paint spilled on the carpet calls for a major cleanup. Even a few drops of paint splattered on the floor or a piece of furniture will be noticed by the customer in the post-painting inspection of the job.

Instead of using a harsh solvent to do that cleanup, painters would be best served by an environmentally friendly remover that won't risk damaging the

surface, won't leave a smell and will leave a happy customer. An all-purpose stain remover really belongs in the supplies kit of every professional because there are such a wide range of surfaces that may need cleaning.

"Winning Colours Stain Remover cleans drips, drops and disasters of all kinds," says Winning Brands CEO Eric Lehner. "It's strong as solvent but gentle as soap. It converts an oil-based paint mess into a simple cleanup with water. That's 1,000 plus cleaning solutions in one convenient solution."

Those uses include cleaning stains on delicate surfaces like skin, clothing or carpet, as well as robust surfaces, like steel street signs and concrete slabs. Winning Colours Stain Remover also cleans up graffiti well, although it's not recommended for cleaning highly porous surfaces like brick. After several years of hearing testimonials from customers, Lehner isn't surprised anymore by the stain cleaning stories he hears. "There is a steady stream of unusual situations where people have used our product that proves they aren't unusual," says Lehner.

Marc Fuino, manager of Hessler Paint & Decorating in Boynton Beach, Fla., recently decided to try Winning Colours in his store after several of his customers began asking if he carried the product. "We sold out within a day, and sold out the second shipment as well," he says.



The Winning Colours Stain Remover can also make an effective counter display. Use a carpet sample that can be sprayed with stain, and then cleaned up with the remover.

It didn't take long for him to realize the product's value was in its versatility.

Customers often come into Hessler asking for a product that will take out a stain, so Fuino is always looking for a product that will do a better job of cleaning up. "I have a whole line of solvents for different uses and with varying degrees of intensity," he says, "but many of them do further damage to the product they're cleaning. Sometimes I can't recommend them because the customer wants to clean a delicate surface."

If, like Fuino, you have customers already coming to your store looking for ways to remove stains, Winning Colours can help establish your reputation



beyond paint. A homeowner might only pick up a paint brush once a year, but they're going to have spills to clean up all year long.

"One thing we're doing for the paint sector is giving consumers a reason to come into the paint department," says Lehner. "If we encourage people to go to the paint department for a stain remover, that reinforces the perception that the paint industry can be experts

in the area, rather than thinking an advanced solution for cleaning spots is only available in the cleaning aisle."

After hearing a continual stream of testimonials from customers, Fuino is convinced he made the right decision when he decided to try the Winning Colours product. "It's a definite winner," he says. It's half the price of other cleaners, and in terms of what it does and all the ways it can be used, pound

**Left:** This vandalized ice vending machine caught the eye of Winning Brands CEO Eric Lehner, who might say CEO refers to "Clean Everything On-Sight."

**Middle:** Cold water, Winning Colours Stain Remover and sponge were all he needed to tackle the cleanup.

**Right:** Just a few minutes later, the ice machine looks good as new.

for pound, this is the best cleaning product on the shelf right now."

## Stories from the Field

The best way to understand how easy it is to use the Winning Colours Stain Remover product is to see it at work.

**Cleanup at the Paint Counter.** The biggest compliment a paint retailer can pay to Winning Colours is to use it in the store. It was a lifesaver for Jeff Kerns, operations manager at the Capital Paint Center store in Staten Island, N.Y. An accidental paint spill left paint all over the colorant machine and the floor. He used Winning Colours Stain Remover to clean up the machine and the floor, and gives him one more story to tell to contractors looking for a post-painting product. "We found the Winning Colours Stain Remover at Lancaster's Orlando market," says Kerns. "Our contractors love it and a lot of them carry it around in their trucks."

**When Dry Cleaning Won't Work.** Marc Fuino, who manages Hessler Paint & Decorating in Boynton Beach, Fla., sometimes has customers looking for a solution to get stains out of clothing. One gentleman had a stain on an expensive suede suit he had taken to two different dry cleaners. A woman had a blouse with mascara on it, and had also taken it to the cleaners. In both instances, the dry cleaners couldn't remove the stain. Fuino recommended Winning Colours, which removed the stain without damaging the clothes.

**Expensive Spill.** Fuino also had a contractor painter that made what could have been an expensive mistake: he spilled a quart of paint on a customer's carpet. Instead of having to replace the carpet or use a harsh cleaner that would have left a ghost spot, Winning Colours left it good as new, says Fuino.

**Animal Rescue.** A more dramatic, and traumatic, story comes from Denmark. A woman came home to discover vandals had poured used motor oil and diesel fuel on her golden retriever. After the police were summoned, officials tried cleaning up the dog using dishwashing detergent, generally considered the preferred product to deal with such messes. The soap didn't work, but officials were able to put the dog's owner in touch with a bottle of Winning Colours Stain Remover. This time, the result was happy. The stain remover gently and effectively cleaned all the oil off the puppy, and had officials start thinking about how they could incorporate the product into other animal rescue efforts.

## A Goodwill Gesture

Earlier this year, Winning Colours donated several boxes of stain remover to volunteers in the Gulf of Mexico who were cleaning up after the Deepwater Horizon oil spill. While the product wasn't well-known enough to oil company BP and the U.S. Government to get widespread use among their teams, CEO Eric Lehner says there are a few forward-looking groups that used the product to clean-up their personal effects, skin or clothing after a day of working around the spill.