

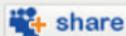
## Troy cleaning service protects environment



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By **JACQUELYN GUTC**  
Of The Oakland Press

Every couple's lives change dramatically when they have children. Most don't alter their business practices because of it though.

Mike and Tina Ersig did.

After about 10 years in the carpet and upholstery cleaning business, the husband and wife, who own what is now called The Greener Cleaner in Troy, changed their cleaning process in 2008 when Tina was pregnant with their first child.

"Three years ago when I was pregnant with my daughter, I did a lot of research and found what was in traditional carpet cleaning methods, and we decided to become an all-green company. Traditional carpet cleaning methods include VOCs, phosphates and even pesticides," she said.

VOCs — volatile organic compounds — are gases that are emitted from certain solids and liquids.

According to the Environmental Protection Agency, some may have long- and short-term adverse health effects and are often found in paints, cleaning supplies, building materials and pesticides.

Phosphorus is a naturally occurring element, but scientists say too much of it being used in detergents and fertilizers runs off into lakes and coastal waters, eventually having a negative effect on drinking water.

Ersig said The Greener Cleaner uses top-of-the-line truck-mounted steam-cleaning equipment similar to other carpet cleaning companies, and what makes it so people and eco-friendly is its EPA-certified cleaning solution, which is, in layman's terms, made of baking soda, table salt and water.

"It also really helps people with allergies and asthma," Ersig said, adding that many clients have said their symptoms have decreased after cleanings. The nontoxic concoction is not only used by the company for carpet and upholstery cleaning, but also tile and grout, as well as mattress cleaning.

Ersig said that since going green, the company has seen a boost in business and that it's continuing to grow at a fast pace, fueling the need for the company to hire another employee.

Many of the Ersigs' customers are parents who had been concerned about chemicals being used in their homes and didn't know a green carpet cleaning option existed.

"Everything that we bring into your home for the cleaning is actually food grade material," she said. "You don't have to worry about chemicals in your home after your carpets are clean. You don't have to worry about your kids or pets being on the carpets and being exposed to anything that couple be harmful to them."

Other companies offer options they call green, but The Greener Cleaner is said to be the only all-green carpet and upholstery cleaner in Michigan. Mike also is trained and certified by the Institute of Inspection, Cleaning and Restoration, and Tina said less than 15 percent of cleaners have the certification.

She added that being a family-owned and operated company helps it provide a high level of customer service. It offers 24-hour emergency water damage response, using an eco-friendly disinfectant, and also doesn't charge extra for spot treatment and light furniture moving.

The Greener Cleaner is one of several green businesses that will have a place at Rochester's Green Living Festival (formerly the Earth Day Festival), today, May 13, through Sunday, May 15, in downtown Rochester. Visit [www.migreenteam.com](http://www.migreenteam.com).

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Mike and Tina Ersig, owners of Greener Cleaner.