

Fleet owners beware!

Always ask to see their Material Safety Data Sheet!

Remember that beautiful tractor/trailer that you purchased for \$150,000? Then you spent another \$10,000 having it 'wrapped' with your company logo and advertising. Now it is only 6 months old and it's looking dull and faded. Why is that?

The following are indisputable facts as to why that happens; it really isn't your fault. How else would you know this unless you made a living by washing tractor/trailers?

You should realize that **sodium and potassium hydroxide**, ingredients used in common cleaning products, are **caustic and corrosive**. When applied to painted surfaces, they dull and destroy the paint as well as those expensive decals and truck-wraps.

When products containing either of these two ingredients are first applied, the dirt starts 'rolling off' the surface almost immediately—but so does a microscopic layer of paint.

Why do contractors use it? There are 3 primary reasons:

1. It is cheap.
2. There is less work involved.
3. Fleet owners and managers do not realize the ongoing impact of those chemicals. Often, after 'beating' the contractor so far down on price, the contractor has little choice but to cut corners anywhere they can.

So, what exactly are they using to clean your vehicles? The following two popular truck wash products were pulled at random. This information comes directly from their Materials Data Safety Sheet, or MSDS, which is posted online.

BIG Z - LIQUID TRUCK AND TRAILER WASH

(from a very well-known chemical manufacturer)

Chemical Ingredient:

SODIUM HYDROXIDE (caustic soda; soda lye) 10% - 20%

BULLDOG TRUCK WASH

(from a very well-known chemical manufacturer)

Chemical Ingredient:

SODIUM HYDROXIDE (caustic soda; soda lye) 5% - 15%

These are typical; most manufactures of truck wash detergents produce products containing **sodium or potassium hydroxide**.

Always ask the contractor to produce the MSDS on the products they use and if you see either Sodium or Potassium Hydroxide listed as an ingredient you are in for some very expensive and irreversible damage.

Now, let's take a look at the ingredients of some other products that we are all familiar with. These are all great products and my favorites when it comes to the task that they were intended to be used for.

EASY OFF® OVEN CLEANER

Chemical Ingredient:

SODIUM HYDROXIDE 3% - 7%

(caustic soda; soda lye)



DRANO® CRYSTALS DRAIN CLEANER

Chemical Ingredient:

SODIUM HYDROXIDE 30% - 60%

(caustic soda; soda lye)

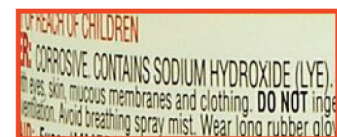


PEEL AWAY 1® PAINT STRIPPER

Chemical Ingredient:

SODIUM HYDROXIDE 9%

(caustic soda; soda lye)



SO HERE IS THE 'BOTTOM LINE' QUESTION: Would you knowingly take your own car down to the local car wash if you knew that they were going to wash it using any of these products? If the answer is NO then why would you allow a contractor wash that \$150,000 truck using a product containing the same ingredient?