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The garment: A pink, white, black geometric printed design cotton jacket with various size black plastic stones around the neck, front, hem and cuffs. The care label reads, "Professional Dry Clean Only" with a warning that states, "press and steam on backside". There are no international cleanability symbols.

The problem: After drycleaning in perchlorethylene solvent the black plastic trim partially dissolved resulting in an objectionable appearance to the trim, as well as self-staining of the base fabric and the lining. The plastic used to make this decorative design dissolves during drycleaning. Steam finishing and/or heat are not factors, so the label warning is not viable.

Who's responsible? The manufacturer, since all components on a garment must be able to withstand the recommended professional cleaning process, as labeled.

What to do: This jacket should be returned to the place of purchase or manufacturer.

Since the trim damage is related to solvent power, a process using a lower power solvent (such as petroleum, hydrocarbon, or GreenEarth) may have been successful. In some cases, depending on dye colorfastness and fiber type, professional wet cleaning may be an option. However, according to the United States care labeling regulation, this garment could be drycleaned safely in any solvent including perc. This interpretation may differ in other countries.

Click image for a larger view



This multi-color print jacket had plastic trim that dissolved during acceptable drycleaning procedures.



This close up view of the lower front portion reveals the dissolved stones and self-staining of nearby fabric and lining after drycleaning.

Featuring a garment does not imply that a manufacturer is knowingly or continually producing defective goods. While this particular item was deemed unable to withstand the recommended care process, other comparable garments may or may not hold up to the care instructions.

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