



Nano-Tex Launches Fluorocarbon-Free Aquapel™

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Nano-Tex, an Oakland, Calif.-based supplier of nanotechnology-based textile enhancements for apparel, home and interiors applications, has developed a fluoro-carbon-free finish that provides water-based liquid repellency to fabrics at a lower cost than the company's traditional fluorocarbon-based repellency products.

Aquapel™ technology replaces the fluorocarbon polymer used traditionally to provide repellency with a less expensive hydrocarbon polymer. Mark Bruten, Nano-Tex's senior vice president of marketing and product development, noted that although the company's traditional repellency technologies produce undetectable amounts of perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) and therefore are less hazardous to the environment and human health than older versions of the fluorocarbon technology, Aquapel is completely PFOA-free.

"We started using our PFOA-undetectable technology four or five years ago, and although we stand by the safety of that technology, there's still potential concern about what happens during the degradation process and whether it could possibly emit any PFOA in that process," Bruten said. "By replacing it with hydrocarbon-based technology that is completely PFOA-free and won't degrade into PFOA, we can offer a more environmentally friendly product that is still effective. And, because the cost of the chemistry is less, there are some fairly meaningful savings to be realized.

"Our traditional products are still appropriate for workwear worn by mechanics, bartenders or other workers in situations where oil and alcohol stains and spills will be more prevalent, but they may be over-protective for articles that just need to repel rain or snow," Bruten said, noting that Aquapel offers water repellency but not oil or alcohol repellency, and so it is particularly well-suited for apparel and textile products that are targeted to outdoor activities, and mentioned outerwear, tents, backpacks and other such products that need to exhibit water repellency but would not be subject to oil or alcohol staining or spilling.