

# Wagner & Griswold Society

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(Moderators: [Scott Sanders](#), [Jeff Friend](#))

 **Cleaning in self cleaning oven?** (Read 316 times)

 **Richard Wilts**

 **Cleaning in self cleaning oven?**

Jan 15<sup>th</sup>, 2013, 4:52am

i just started finding CI ,i have cleaned my three pieces in the self cleaning oven ,they all turn out well and one was very dirty and had a heavy built up ,,i notice most of you use lye or electrolysis is there any reason or down falls to useing the self cleaning oven? my oven highes temp. is 550 degrees and the next setting is the self cleaning setting,,so it must be 600 degrees and when lock the clock says 4 hrs and 15 minutes before you can open it..let me no your experence cleaning in a self cleaning oven those of you that has tried this way of cleaning

Posts: 113

 **Paul Beer**

WAGS member

★★★★★

 **Re: Cleaning in self cleaning oven?**

**Reply #1** - Jan 15<sup>th</sup>, 2013, 9:31am

I started out like you several years ago before we got on to the electrolysis. It does work of course but there are several draw backs. First it doesn't remove rust which you must do with water and vinegar. It stinks up the house and corrodes your oven racks. It can get the surrounding cabinetry to the oven very hot which you must watch closely. If you are married it has a very diliatory effect on your relationship also. My reccomendation is that you set up an electrolysis as soon as possible as it is the cleanest and most effective method and removes everything including the rust....and has a soothing effect on the domestic scene.

Posts: 1431

 **C. B. Williams**

Forum Administrator

WAGS member

★★★★★

 **Re: Cleaning in self cleaning oven?**

**Reply #2** - Jan 15<sup>th</sup>, 2013, 10:38am

Self cleaning ovens go to about 900 deg. F. in the cleaning cycle.

Posts: 5348

 **Cheryl Watson**

Forum Administrator

WAGS member

★★★★★

 **Re: Cleaning in self cleaning oven?**

**Reply #3** - Jan 15<sup>th</sup>, 2013, 1:17pm

While the self cleaning oven works and others here use it, I still have the concern about the high heat possibly causing heat stress to my very thinwalled skilletts, like my ERIES and OLDER Wagners, etc. And I fully agree with Paul's observations.

Posts: 4009

I had to move my high heat seasoning operation outside to the BBQ grill because of the smokefest in the house! 😊  
I now coat/preserve my clean iron with Mineral Oil, and save the regular seasoning process for pieces I know are going to be used in the near future for cooking. 😊

Now I just luv the self clean oven for cleaning aluminum, but I only collect a few aluminum pieces.. 😊

 **Jim Glatthaar**

WAGS member

★★★★★

 **Re: Cleaning in self cleaning oven?**

**Reply #4** - Jan 16<sup>th</sup>, 2013, 12:41am

A friend used the self-cleaning oven method to remove old seasoning from a skillet. In a word, he hated it. Smoke, odors, etc. made him commit never to do it again. He stripped a second skillet by placing it in the dishwasher (I was not familiar with this method, but he read about it over the internet), which stripped all the old seasoning and left a layer of rust all over it. He then soaked it in vinegar and scrubbed off the rust, then re-seasoning the skillet. It worked. It was unconventional, but it worked.

Posts: 625

 **Jim Glatthaar**

WAGS member

★★★★★

 **Re: Cleaning in self cleaning oven?**

**Reply #5** - Jan 16<sup>th</sup>, 2013, 12:43am

I forgot to mention that I agree with Cheryl's concert about the self-cleaning over creating or worsening hairline cracks, which may be on the skillet but covered by old seasoning and gunk.

Posts: 625

 **Tom Neitzel**

Forum Administrator

★★★★★

 **Re: Cleaning in self cleaning oven?**

**Reply #6** - Jan 16<sup>th</sup>, 2013, 10:01am

Just something to think about.

Posts: 4559

When you use the oven, you have a slow, even heating up to temperature. Same temperature all around the pan, inside, outside, and the sides. 900 degrees or so is less than 1/2 the melting point of iron.

Then a slow cooling back to normal oven temperatures. If anything it is more like an annealing process.

I do agree that hairline cracks already present will become more obvious when the seasoning is removed, might even crack a bit more, but the crack would have been there to start with.

Now think about using a skillet on top of the stove. If using an electric stove, a glowing red coil can be at 1,200F.

But let's say we don't use high and the temperature of the burner (could be gas too) is just 450F. The air all around it is say, 72F. Quite a difference. Not the even heat in an oven.

We heat the pan up nicely, then throw cold (72F) oil in and cold food to cook. Temperature difference may be as little as 200F or so.

Less stress than the even heat in an oven? Likely not.

Just some thoughts. The SCO does stink. Really a bit scary if the crud is thick. I've got so I use lye first then get the tough bits off with the oven.

Just my choices, all of us do what we feel most comfortable doing.

Tom

**Cheryl Watson**  
Forum Administrator  
WAGS member  
★★★★★

Posts: 4009

 **Re: Cleaning in self cleaning oven?**

**Reply #7** - Jan 16<sup>th</sup>, 2013, 1:15pm  
Another footnote to the discussion:

DO NOT put Alaska Coil Handles for Waffle Irons thru a self cleaning oven cycle.  
Ditto for items with "Bail" handles.

The high heat will cause loss of "Tempering" in the Wire of the Coil Handles and Bails.

No one likes floppy wire handles and bails! 😞

**Mike Shonfield**  
WAGS member  
★★★★★

Canadian eh!

Posts: 1329

 **Re: Cleaning in self cleaning oven?**

**Reply #8** - Jan 16<sup>th</sup>, 2013, 1:42pm

Richard, I use the self clean oven method almost exclusively.

I live alone and no one has ever complained about the smoke. I find most of the smoke happens when I season and not when I clean.

I have never had it increase the size of a crack in a pan. I don't put in wood handles or coil handles. I take them off first.

But the thing you are not realizing is the volume of cast iron people on here have. If I had a large quantity like some, I would use lye or electrolysis as it is cheaper.

But for the quantity I have, about 100 over the last 5 years, the self clean oven is just fine.

**Paul Beer**  
WAGS member  
★★★★★

Posts: 1431

 **Re: Cleaning in self cleaning oven?**

**Reply #9** - Jan 16<sup>th</sup>, 2013, 2:35pm

the nice thing about the etectrolysis it doesn't have all these retrictions as to what you can and can not put in it, no smell or heat problems, or cleaning, or damage to the oven racks. It is quiet and odorless and does it all. Safe also if you have kids etc around with a tank of lye. You avoids the vinegar soaking to remove rust. All in one deal. Not

expensive to set up and leave in a corner of the garage. Sure does make for nicer companionships... 😊

**Tom Neitzel**  
Forum Administrator  
★★★★★

Posts: 4559

 **Re: Cleaning in self cleaning oven?**

**Reply #10** - Jan 16<sup>th</sup>, 2013, 3:03pm

[Quote from Mike Shonfield on Jan 16<sup>th</sup>, 2013, 1:42pm:](#)  
I would use lye or electrolysis as it is cheaper.

I agree with everything you said Mike, except the cheapness. Lye is cheap. Electrolysis is quite a bit more expensive than a self-cleaning oven to use. There's an ancient thread somewhere here where I calculated up the relative costs. Amps, time and duty cycle all play in the calculations.

I do use electrolysis a fair amount though to get the rust off after the SCO.

Tom

**Mike Shonfield**  
WAGS member  
★★★★★

Posts: 1329

 **Re: Cleaning in self cleaning oven?**

**Reply #11** - Jan 16<sup>th</sup>, 2013, 3:13pm

Think I now recall that thread Tom.

But why do you feel you must get the rust off? Is it heavy rust?

If it is a flat powdery rust I just leave it, season over it and never see it again.

**Tom Neitzel**  
Forum Administrator  
★★★★★

Posts: 4559

 **Re: Cleaning in self cleaning oven?**

**Reply #12** - Jan 16<sup>th</sup>, 2013, 3:22pm

It is the heavier rust Mike. The lye and oven don't touch it. I do the same as you with the light, flash rust. Mineral oil goes on, rust disappears.

**Tom Meinke**  
WAGS member  
★★★★★

Posts: 420

 **Re: Cleaning in self cleaning oven?**

**Reply #13** - Jan 18<sup>th</sup>, 2013, 11:09am

I only use the SCO to clean my iron, I have used lye but found that it did not get the iron as clean as the SCO . I have cleaned hundreds of pieces with no ill effect. I find that about 2 hours in the SCO is sufficient and have never had a bail handle get floppy on me afterwards. I agree with what Tom N. said about using the lye in conjunction with the SCO it defiantly cuts down on the smoke as does a good exhaust fan. I load my oven with as much iron as I can before running the self clean cycle, in one day I can have between 5 and 10 items cleaned and seasoned.

What this thread shows is that everyone has there own methods and they all work 😊