Safety of STERLING ROPE Following White Nose Syndrome Decontamination Protocol

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In order to assess the impact of the White-Nose Syndrome (WNS) decontamination protocols on the safety of rope and other critical climbing gear, we worked with Sterling Rope to assess the strength of their equipment following an effective WNS decontamination protocol. The protocol used for decontamination was as follows:

1. The rope/stitched webbing was washed in a front-loading washing machine on a delicate (cold) cycle using Woolite™ detergent (at the manufacturer's recommended concentration)
2. The rope/stitched webbing was removed and placed in a 1:128 diluted Lysol IC™ Concentrated Formulation Quaternary Disinfectant Cleaner for 15 minutes [with a final concentration of quaternary compound of at least 0.15%]
3. The rope/stitched webbing was washed twice by soaking in clean water
4. The rope/stitched webbing was allowed to air dry

New ropes (Sterling Superstatic or HTP) or stitched webbing (Sterling tubular 1" webbing) were treated using this protocol for 1 - 5 consecutive treatments. The strength of the ropes/stitched webbing were then tested at the Sterling rope testing facility with the results as follows (all measurements are given in kN):

7/16" SuperStatic Rope		
Untreated	Treated once	Treated 5 times
33.13	33.10	31.91
31.46	32.33	32.71
31.89	31.23	32.83
32.50	31.33	32.05
32.75	31.62	31.68

7/16" HTP Rope		
Untreated	Treated once	Treated 5 times
33.82	32.09	31.73
33.45	34.61	34.14
34.22	33.93	32.41
32.98	32.50	32.61
34.45	33.50	34.49

1" Tubular Mil Spec Webbing	
Untreated	Treated 5 times
28.50	32.14
28.80	28.69
30.28	30.64
28.88	29.69
28.83	29.68

This data was obtained for Sterling Ropes only, ropes have not been tested from other manufacturers. Information of Sterling Ropes can be found at http://www.sterlingrope.com/