

PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT

We all now know that Going Green is a serious commitment. WE offer this Green Janitorial checklist to provide some guidance to the multiple challenges that a janitorial service faces in order to be Green in more than a token fashion.

One of the first issues that should be considered in a Green Janitorial is TRAINING. Your staff is part of the formula of a Green operation.



Green is more than the products that you purchase. It is the operation of the company as well. Your people need to know what Green and sustainable practices are and how to perform them with a modest level of confidence. We have heard of workers pour too much Green product because they think it isn't working like the non-Green products that they use.

The Green Clean Institute offers a variety of ways to train your staff. One is our Live Regional Training program. The second is our online training that includes videos from our live training sessions. The third is to sponsor a local training for your workers if your company is large or has multiple locations. These training sessions led to Green certification that can be a proud accomplishment of your company.

As you look over this checklist, it is wise to understand that training is the best method of reaching your Green Janitorial status. It is our hope that you will allow the Green Clean Institute to help you reach your status as a truly Green Certified janitorial service.

Visit **www.GreenCleanInstitute.com** for Green Training and Certification

THE GOLD STANDARD IN GREEN CERTIFICATION

There has been an increasing chorus of requests for more clarity on the key elements of a Green Janitorial business. As more businesses seek out Green Certified janitorial services, there is still an obscure set of performance standards that should be met in order to fully show an operational compliance with Green cleaning standards. This Green Certification Checklist is designed for the janitorial firm that wants to implement the critical Green Practices in the business so that the "Green Brag matches the Green Walk."



It is the basic intention of this review to point out what key processes, products, or programs go into a truly Green compliant janitorial firm. To be honest, no governmental agency has put forward a criteria yet, and when this does happen, it is likely to be overly complex and terribly lacking in substance. Our goal is to provide a ready reference that should exceed the expectations of the anticipated compliance issues.

Take note that we have often pointed out the difference between the self-proclaimed Green firms and the ones that actually demonstrate compliance with known standards. For the first time, the Green Clean Institute has laid out what seems to be a comprehensive overview of Green elements for a Green service.

The Transition

We know that janitorial firms cannot transition overnight to what is presented in this workbook of ideas, so it is best to use this book as a checklist that you can gradually work through. We know that you already have a substantial inventory of product and equipment that you cannot throw out, but you can gradually replace. Replacing allows your business to gradually budget the cost of Going Green as a business.



DON'T HIRE A GREEN FAKE
Green Clean Institute Certified
Janitorial Certification



INDOOR AIR QUALITY

Most janitorial firms are well aware of the issues of indoor air quality (IAQ). Indoor air quality is a kind of baseline for any Green office or building and a common starting point that will impact everyone in the operation. Janitorial services help or hurt the indoor air quality of any facility served by your service.

Recent studies by Air Quality Science indicate that the air quality in hundreds of schools, offices, and homes can be more than 36 times the acceptable VOC levels within two hours after cleaning.

Nearly 13% of work-related asthma cases come from the Harvard Green Campus Initiative. Other reports of much higher asthma, allergy, and chemical sensitivity problems are reported by medical workers where stronger cleaning solutions are used.

ADD and AHDH have continued to rise across America which seems to be coincidental to rise of increase chemical use for cleaning homes and school. The introduction of chemical-based cleaners has been promoted to the public for the last 20 years under the banner of "New and Improved" cleaners.

VOCs are fumes that are emitted from many drying products. VOCs are the vapors or fumes that are not removed by the normal air filtration system of the facility. Yet, these fumes are reintroduced day after day and recycled by the HVAC system.

Removing dust and dirt are a part of the cleaning task. The contaminants in the dust and dirt contain an astounding variety of heavy metals, poisons, insect parts, pesticides, asbestos, lead, and pollen. The normal method of cleaning (Top Down System) does a poor job of removing the dirt, and may actually stir up many of the harmful particles than are paying on surfaces.

Here's a basic truth. **GREEN = HEALTH IMPACT**. No office is Green if it is unhealthy for the workers. The choice of cleaning service is far more important than most businesses may think. The workers of the business are an important asset to the functioning and profitability of the business. OSHA reports that U.S. businesses lose more than \$60 billion dollars per year due to poor indoor air quality. Poor indoor air quality contributes to afternoon headaches, lethargy, more sick time, and more medical claims.

Health problem lawsuits have increased more than 300% due to work related exposure to harmful work environments. The choices made by the business are having major financial impacts on the profits and survivability of the company in an adverse world of liabilities.

CLEANING TECHNIQUES

1. Change the "Top Down" strategy of cleaning

We all know the top-down cleaning method that starts with a feather duster on the high areas, a cloth on the mid-range areas, and the vacuum is the last task. In the newer method the top idea is improved by REMOVING not just MOVING dust and dirt from the room.

- a. Traditional cleaning moves the dust and dirt down where it is vacuumed**
- b. Trapping and removing dirt requires better cleaning tools**

Microfiber cloths and HEPA vacuums are the most important part of the new approach. Microfibers collect dust and dirt more effectively and are laundered every day. HEPA vacuums take out more particles from the air than traditional vacuums. The result is less residual dust and dirt left behind.

2. Sweeping compound

If there are times when cement floors or industrial areas are swept, hold down the dust from

3. Place floor mats at doorways with Routine Cleaning

Stopping dirt at the door reduces the cleaning requirements, preserves floor finish, and can also improve air quality.

4. Use microfiber cleaning tools

Microfiber tools are now being used in wet and dry applications.

Microfiber cloths and tools are a dead give-away of whether a company understands the Green cleaning processes or not. Be aware that using microfiber products means a system for daily laundering these products. They can be reused 400-500 times making them cost effective compared to traditional cleaning tools.

Hold training classes on the use of microfiber tools to explain the proper way to use and care for these tools.

SOURCE REDUCTION AND EFFICIENCIES

The older attitude toward Green products was that they were expensive and did not work as well. The belief that "More is Better" needs to be offset by better training. New Green cleaning products do not foam, bubble, fizz, or turn color. They often show no active signs of working, but they will work if instructions are followed.

Packaging is a big problem in business. While your janitorial team may not control the purchasing policies of the firms that you serve, be aware of your purchasing practices. The drive to require less packaging will produce less waste.

1- The Source Reduction Factor

Find ways to use less of anything or re-purpose the items being thrown out. While dust cotton cloths will eventually rot, they are quickly turned into trash. Look for microfiber cloths that can be laundered up to 500 times before being thrown away.

Conduct a trash audit at some point to identify what is being thrown out that could be eliminated early in the cycle.

2- Repurpose, Repair, and Recycle

Every business has equipment and items that are too easily turned to trash. Buy smart looking for items that can be used more than once, or invent a way to re-use what is normally thrown away.

3- RTU verses Concentrates

One of the HUGE ISSUES for cleaning companies is the **RTU (Ready-To-Use) products** that come in a plastic bottle. These products require oil to make the bottle, gas to haul it, and fill up our trash dumps after only ONE USE with trash that will not decompose.

The HUGE QUANTITY of single use plastic bottles by janitorial services is a classic environmental embarrassment. Concentrates and distribution systems are the needed solutions regardless of the convenience of these products. Every janitorial service needs to change their processes to reduce the volume of plastic for products and trash thrown out.

Staff Training

Green cleaning is not always intuitive. Your workers will likely carry the "Old Ways" with them to the workplace. This is not just a matter of janitorial training or the traditional "Watch and Learn" approach.

1. Dwell Time

Dwell Time is the new way to apply Green cleaners and sanitizers. The EPA has demonstrated that the new Green products that use enzymes and nanotechnology require at least two minutes on the surface to effectively do the job. Instead of the traditional "Spray and Wipe" needs to be replaced with a "Spray and Rotate" approach. This need not take more time for the worker, but allows the product to have more time on the surface before the worker returns for the wiping process.,

2. Color and Fragrance

Studies have found that employees are easily convinced that a product is better when there is color and fragrance added to a product. The same solution used in bottles where one contains color and fragrance always results in a perception of superior results with the enhanced product.

Removing additives from cleaning products is a Green concept. Colored bottles can be used if color seems to be an issue for workers.

3. Maintenance and Efficiencies

Going Green is a mindset that needs to be transferred to workers. Keeping equipment in good working order is good for business, allows for a better start of every shift, and can reduce overall costs.

Managers need to review equipment use and maintenance. Many firms have an in-house or visiting repair person to fix and maintenance equipment.

Dangerous Chemicals

There are some outright mistakes that can be made when it comes to Green practices.

1- Ammonia-based window cleaners

It has been long known that ammonia is not a healthy product in nearly any application. Use a more environmentally-friendly glass cleaning product in combination with microfiber cloths.

2- Acid Based bowl cleaners

Acid based bowl cleaners are used to help eliminate stains. Acids are flushed out of the bowl and into the sewer or septic system where they actually inhibit the growth of bacteria that help break down fecal matter. These products harm the water quality and make water purification difficult.

3- Aerosol Sprays versus Spray Bottles

Gases that can be compressed are not generally good for the workplace. Spray bottles offer two very important Green qualities. They can be reused and not thrown into the trash after one use, and they do not need to add a gas to the Indoor Air Quality.

4- Fragrances

Chemical fragrances are not a Green factor even though it is thought to favorably impress the client who initially enters the building. If these are VOC type fragrances, the goal is to reduce or eliminate them. Change over to essential oils in such products which are believed to have therapeutic value to the building inhabitants.

5- Distribution Centers and Concentrates

The RTU (Ready to Use) products are one of the classically neglected issues by cleaning companies. These pose problems from several environmental levels. First of all is the oil required to produce these plastic bottles. Second, knowing that most products are mostly water, transportation creates an undue carbon expense that should be avoided. Thirdly, the single use bottles are a trash problem that will not decay in our lifetime.

The obvious solution is to order chemicals in concentrates and mix them locally. This will reduce the demand for bottles, allow local bottles to be reused, and cut the carbon emissions for product delivery.

Concentrates also reduce inventory space, storage, and handling.

7- Ozone Depleting Chemicals (ODCs)

Certain chemicals are harmful to the ozone layer of the earth and will erode the UV protection of the troposphere. These chemicals are mostly the refrigerants in Chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) and halons used in fire fighting products.

Carbon tetrachloride, carbon tetrafluoride, and methylhalides and halons containing bromine instead of chlorine are used in various cleaning products and metal cleaners.

8- Review the MSDS

No janitorial service should rely on the labels or representations of the sales person. Take time to do an in-house review by looking at the Health Hazard rating of all cleaning products. Often found in Section Six of the MSDS or shown on the NAEP chart.

Ratings of 0 to 1 are considered good signs of the Green potential of a product. Rating of 2 is marginal, and ratings of 3 to 4 are certainly not a Green product.

pH ratings go from a **Acid Range of "0"** (Battery Acid) to a **Alkaline Range of "14"** (Drain Cleaner). Water is the best pH of "7." Be wary of products with corrosive power that are heavily into an acid or alkaline range.

Paper Products

Unknown to some, paper products are now an important consideration in the Green office and these products often come from the janitorial service. The first area of concern is chlorine used to bleach paper white. Therefore, you

1- Eliminate Plastic from the Workplace

Plastic plates, cups and forks are antithetic to the Green workplace. While it may be an added cost, move to paper products when possible.

2- Recycled Paper Products

There are more and more opportunities to buy and use recycled paper products. This is a rather simple choice that usually does not cause a financial hardship on the purchaser.

3- Chlorine Free Paper Products

Finding chlorine-free (or low-chlorine) paper products is not as easy as it should be. Chlorine is used to bleach paper white, but it is a major pollutant from paper mills.

4- Separate Paper Trash

Investigate the options for paper recycling in your area. If the company is not presently using this service but it is available, endeavor to get the customer to install paper trash containers.

Be aware that if paper or cardboard gets wet, many garbage firms will not recycle it but treat it as ordinary trash.

TIP: Certain firms BUY PAPER and CARDBOARD. If there is not conflict in taking the paper from the trash areas and sending it to a recycling center, think about the potential of a self-paying service for paper removal.

Recycling Where Possible

It may not occur to you that the janitorial service plays a part in the recycling. Most of the trash is already there when the service arrives on the scene. These leaves open the question of how the janitorial service can make a real difference.

1- Recycled trash bags instead of virgin plastic bags

This is a kind of "no-brainer." If the cost of recycled trash bags are a few pennies more than your standard trash bag, use the recycled bags. Note, that we discuss biodegradable bags later under composting.

2- Promoting and cooperating with area recycling projects

There is an unspoken duty for all cleaning firms to know about recycling projects in the neighborhood and promote cooperation among the businesses being served.

3- The trash from your janitorial service

What are you doing with your trash? If you are going to Go Green, you need to "Walk the walk, as well as talk the talk."

4- Compostable or Biodegradable Trash

Yard trimmings, paper products, and organic trash are recyclable. Do not put biodegradable or compostable trash into the standard trash bag because this will prevent it from decomposing for a much longer time.

5- eTrash

Copy and computer equipment may be reduced by donating workable equipment to charities and schools. Look for recovery services that will harvest parts from used equipment.

6- Hazardous trash

Most companies know that hazardous trash cannot be mixed with normal trash. Be sure to observe this basic practice.

Checklist of Green Janitorial Practices

It is not required that you do all that we propose on this list. The goal is to give you a baseline of current progress and some goals that can enhance your program.

General Concerns

- Green Training for Employees
- Monthly Review Meeting for Compliance
- Managers who are Green Trained

Indoor Air Quality

- Entry doors have doormats to catch outside dirt and debris
- Facility is cleaned with Green cleaning products
- Janitorial services uses HEPA vacuums
- Microfiber cleaning tools where possible
- Air ducts have been cleaned professionally
- Replace fragrances with essential oil products

Paper Reduction Strategies

- Paper in the facility is 30% or higher recycled
- Hand dryers instead of paper towels
- Paper products are Chlorine free or nearly so

Waste Management

- Recycling bins are used in the company
- RTU products are replaced in favor of concentrates
- Recycled trash bags instead of virgin plastic

Green Chain Supply

- Observes EPA “Environmentally Preferred Purchasing” concept
- Buy from Green certified vendors
- Buy locally when possible
- Chemical-Free cleaning tools (ei. Activelon or Lotuspro.co)
- Avoid Acid Based bowl cleaners
- Avoid Ammonia Based window cleaners
- Find a Green Disinfectant product