



Implementing a Green Cleaning Program

The goal of Green cleaning is to reduce the impact cleaning has on the environment. For it to work successfully, we should view Green cleaning as a system—all of its components must be in place and working properly.

Here are key steps to creating an effective Green cleaning system:

HAVE AN AGREEMENT

Building owners, occupants, and cleaning contractors must agree on how they define a Green cleaning program and how it will be implemented. It is often best for this agreement to be in writing in the form of a concise, easy-to-understand contract.

BUILD A TEAM AND PROJECT SUPPORT

With the agreement in hand, all parties must build a team that includes stakeholders from each group: cleaning professionals, owners and managers, and occupants. The team will discuss the Green cleaning system and generate support for the project from all building occupants—a pivotal role in its success.

CONDUCT BASELINE AUDITS

One of the team's duties is to determine the facility's housekeeping status by conducting audits to verify how the facility is being cleaned and maintained. The initial audit will establish a baseline by which to measure future improvement. For instance, the surveys would include an inventory and evaluation of paper products, liners, and cleaning equipment. It may also include appraisals of the following:

OVERALL HOUSEKEEPING QUALITY

Cleaning procedures, including training and supervision, recycling, indoor air quality problems and complaint records

DEVELOP A PLAN

Once the data have been collected, the team must analyze the information to determine the best ways to implement the Green cleaning system. They decide which areas need to be addressed first, based on contract requirements, cost, and potential health and environmental impacts.

GET EVERYONE ON BOARD

It is vital that everyone is involved in the process and supports the team's goals. This is often best accomplished by making all affected parties aware of how and why things are being done.

ACQUIRE GREEN PRODUCTS AND EQUIPMENT

To begin the process of Greening a facility, new cleaning products and equipment may need to be purchased. This may include environmentally preferable cleaning chemicals, HEPA and true-HEPA vacuum cleaners, cylindrical floor machines or machines with dust-control systems to capture airborne impurities, and microfiber cleaning cloths and mops, which are more absorbent than conventional cloths and mops and reduce the need for chemicals.

IMPLEMENT GREEN PROCEDURES

Instruct all cleaning professionals on the use of environmentally preferable products. Adopting Green cleaning is an opportunity for maintenance personnel to learn the most up-to-date cleaning procedures. This often streamlines operations and improves the appearance and health of the facility.

TAKE RESPONSIBILITY THROUGH STEWARDSHIP

Once a Green cleaning program has begun, cleaning personnel as well as owners and building occupants share in the responsibility of maintaining a healthy and productive indoor environment. This is called stewardship. These stakeholders make sure the Green cleaning system is successful by reviewing the program's progress and implementing changes necessary for the health of the facility.

COMMUNICATE AND PROVIDE FEEDBACK

Communication and feedback are vital among chemical suppliers, building occupants, and management. As with any new procedure involving many people, the ultimate goal is continued improvement. Information provided by all parties helps facilitate this.

For more information, visit <http://www.cfrcorp.com/> or contact a CFR representative in your area.