



GREEN PRODUCTS FOR YOUR FACILITY

We Have Seen the Future of Clean and it is Green

Although some in our industry may find it hard to believe, the field of building maintenance is being thrust to the forefront of a major business and environmental trend: the greening of cleaning operations.¹ Why? Because we are major decision makers in such areas as hand towel and toilet tissue (4.5 billion pounds per year), plastic trash bags (35 billion per year) and cleaning products (6 billion pounds a year).²

Green cleaning means using processes and products that reduce the environmental and health effects of housekeeping on both interior environments—inside companies, schools, hospitals and governmental agencies – and outside environments including the atmosphere, land fills and forest resources.³

For those professionals who have been in building maintenance for a long time, the most important thing to bring to the topic of green cleaning today is an open mind. Many of us made decisions against green alternatives based on first-generation products that were expensive, hard to find and often less effective.⁴ But that's not how it is today. There are better alternatives available, and we think you'll want to know about them. We know you are interested in quality improvements.⁵

Today you will find many effective, competitively priced green products produced by mainstream companies. As the variety of green products has increased, the competitive pressures have brought prices down to be competitive with traditional options. Many green cleaning options are offered in this catalog alongside the more traditional choices. Having green products that can offer the same levels of satisfactory performance makes them an even more viable solution.

Not only have products improved, in the current business environment it is a good idea to shift preemptively towards greener choices. There are green cleaning companies springing up or adding green cleaning options today to take advantage of this trend. So we are at a key moment where there is an opportunity for people in our industry to demonstrate leadership by learning more about green cleaning and initiating green buying.⁶

One of the major factors in the shift toward the use of green cleaning products is the U.S. Green Building Council's LEED rating system. This organization certifies existing buildings and new construction according to a list of standards expressed as "points." The most basic level of certification for existing buildings calls for only 32 points, and it is possible to get as many as 14 for the use of green cleaning processes and materials.⁷ LEED certification is not just a matter of organizational pride, it can be a factor in winning contracts, and a growing number of communities and other governmental agencies are generating tax breaks and other financial incentives for LEED certified buildings.⁸

Even without financial incentives, consider that laws may mandate green cleaning in your state someday. For example, in 2007 the State of Illinois passed the Green Clean Schools Act, which requires schools to use green cleaning products.⁹ It became the second state after New York to do so, and Missouri soon followed to become the third.^{10, 11}

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Despite all the benefits of green cleaning, we find that the biggest barriers to adapting green cleaning solutions are old attitudes and old habits. But with new, equally effective options available—options that offer the added benefit of being less harmful – perhaps we can all learn some new tricks.

Throughout this catalog we will be pointing out opportunities for you to consider green options and tips for how you can easily make choices that are better for the environment. We feel that it is part of our responsibility to work together to protect our environment, and we hope you feel the same.

References:

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U.S. EPA's Design for the Environment (DfE)

The U.S. EPA recognizes product for its use of the safest possible ingredients

Green Seal

Green Seal sets standards for hand cleaners based on reduced toxicity and limited environmental impact

EcoLogo™ (Environmental Choice)

EcoLogo™ sets standards for hand cleaners that demonstrate biodegradability, performance, limited toxicity and limited environmental impact.

ACMI (Art & Creative Materials Institute)

The Art & Creative Materials Institute (ACMI) certifies product as non-toxic.