

Green Cleaning and Me

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As Published in *Campus Facility Maintenance*, Winter 2004, p 32



I want to begin by expressing my thanks to Cygnus Business Media, the publisher of *Campus Facility Maintenance*, for providing an opportunity to discuss issues relevant to Green Cleaning that will reduce cleaning's impact on health, improve student performance (as it is affected by creating healthier learning spaces), improve facility services and reduce environmental impacts from janitorial operations.

Because you are just getting to know me this is my first column in this brand-new magazine I thought it would be an opportune time for me to tell you a bit about Green Cleaning, the cause to which I have dedicated so much of my career and myself.

Green Cleaning is not only my focus and career; it also reflects my personal values on the importance of environmentally-preferable cleaning products for our health, the cleaning industry and the environment.

JUDGE THE TREE BY THE FRUIT THAT IT BEARS

I don't want to mistake "activity for "accomplishments." Rather than presenting a biographic description of my youth, college, time in the ministry and 20-plus year career, perhaps a better way to inform you about my understanding and commitment to the cleaning industry and Green Cleaning is by telling you about some of what I have achieved. In this way, you can be the judge of whether this and future columns will be of value to you. These are some of my accomplishments:

- Chairman of the task force that wrote the national cleaning standard - *Standard Guide on Stewardship for Cleaning Commercial & Institutional Buildings* (ASTM E 1971)
- Founding member of the president's Green Chemistry Challenge Awards Program and former judge for the White House: Closing the Circle Awards
- Active participant in the U.S. Green Building Council since 1994, currently serving on the Steering Committee for LEED for Existing Buildings (LEED-EB)
- Lead author on the Collaborative for High Performance Schools (CHPS) O & M Manual's cleaning chapter; and contributing author to a book on protecting student health in schools to be published in 2005 by Emory University and Oxford Press
- Recipient of numerous awards and recognitions including being selected to the "Power 50" by *Indoor Environment Review* as one of the 50 most influential people in the indoor environment industry; and a recipient of a "Hammer Award" presented by the White House for work to "reinvent" the govern-

ment

- Technical adviser to numerous organizations including the Healthy Schools Campaign; member of EPA's Working Group on Healthy Schools; lead author for Green Seal's environmentally-preferable cleaning program and assisting in developing several "green" product standards

MY "AGENDA" AND PROMISE TO YOU

All authors try to be unbiased and objective. But as you know, we all bring our experiences and values with us to everything we do. Thus, to be clear, my "agenda" is to "sell" you on the opportunities that Green Cleaning offers (don't worry - I do not sell chemicals, equipment, or other products). I fundamentally believe that Green Cleaning can reestablish the value that our industry offers - it can help us improve health as well as occupant/student performance. It can also help us reduce the downward spiral in the size of our budgets, which can often adversely affect our ability to do our job.

So my promise to you is to be as direct, honest, and objective as possible and to provide you with the best and most up-to-date information on this subject as we continue in our work to "green" schools and campuses across the country.

EXPECTATIONS

Green Cleaning is designed to get everyone involved in making a building a healthier place to work, learn, live and use. The dialogue and interaction it creates among building owners, managers, tenants and maintenance personnel is one of the great benefits of Green Cleaning. All parties are on the "same page" with the same objectives in mind as they move away from prescriptive cleaning contracts to performance-based cleaning.

Additionally, once a building turns green, it becomes a healthier facility, cleaning workers are often more responsive to the needs of the occupants, and, in turn, there is an enhanced respect for the cleaning professionals maintaining the location. Moreover, there is a more proactive understanding by building occupants, managers and owners as to how a building is maintained and what is occurring in the facility where they likely spend more than one-third of their lives.

IN THE KNOW

I hope this has helped introduce me to you and the importance of Green Cleaning. My future "In the Know" columns will deal with specific issues related to health and Green Cleaning and explore actual examples and case studies where Green Cleaning systems have been implemented. Your comments are also invited: a dialogue on Green Cleaning promotes understanding and that is what has taken it from the fad of a decade ago to the most important trend in the cleaning industry today.

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