

# ELIMINATING WASTE IS GOOD FOR THE ENVIRONMENT AND THE BOTTOM LINE

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**T**he annual ISSA /INTERCLEAN show was held in Orlando this past November, providing the opportunity to Building Service Providers/Commercial Cleaning Companies to become more familiar with the new and changing technologies in the cleaning industry. Almost 17,000 attendees and 630 exhibitors from 70 countries, participated in two days of seminars, and three days of exhibits and demonstrations.

The overwhelming message throughout the conference was that Green continues to grow. Stephen Ashkin, the widely recognized green cleaning expert, stated that in just this past year, there are 73% more “green” products on the market – the equivalent of 4,744 more products. This number will only continue to increase, and will require all cleaning companies to become educated in the ways of green cleaning, as well as those who contract for cleaning. Green cleaning encompasses more than just cleaning. It is about preventative maintenance, time management, and continuous improvement of cleaning practices, while focusing on health, without harming the environment. The perfect practical combination occurs when products are more effective and more efficient and pricing is competitive, which result in cleaner, healthier and more efficient buildings. Stephen Ashkin refers to this as “Green Cleaning Fundamentals”, and following is a summary and update on what Property Managers can and should expect from the practices of their commercial cleaning companies:

## Prevention

Walk-off mats at building entrance doors are the most effective way of stopping dirt from entering a building, by placing them inside and outside the entrances. This improves the cleanliness of a building, in addition to providing skid-free surfaces.

Closed dispensing systems on concentrated chemicals prevent waste and eliminate the possibility of contamination and/or direct exposure. This practical combination of prevention and safety is important to all facilities!

## Chemicals

Third party certification ensures that chemicals meet certain standards, providing transparency in ingredients, sustainability reporting and life cycle management. Concentrated chemicals reduce shipping costs. Microfiber reduces the need for chemicals, and can be used without chemicals to clean certain surfaces. Steam vapor products have been used in recent years in restrooms for sanitizing purposes. Most recently introduced to the market are chemical-free cleaners, such as the Active-Ion Ionator, which ionizes tap water replacing general purpose cleaners and some disinfectants, killing 99.9% of germs, in 6 seconds. Electrolyzed and ozonated water cleaners are other options, new to the market, which will undoubtedly reduce the need for chemicals in the near future. This will contribute to improvement in indoor air quality and provided health benefits for those who suffer from allergies or asthma.

## Equipment

Ergonomic comfort supports efficient cleaning, high durability extends equipment life, and when combined with energy savings, the result is better cleaning and lower energy costs. New equipment implement all three elements to work more efficiently.



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## Consumables – Paper and Liners

Reducing consumption is possible by purchasing appropriate sizes, quality, and/or thickness, such as roll towels instead of multi-folds. While third party certification validates recycled content, sustainably managed forests also provide a green alternative to virgin paper products. New liners on the market from Noramco, have an additive with a built-in time release that degrade the in just 120 days when placed in landfills, providing a great alternative.

As more buildings consider registering for LEED-EBOM, documentation of all the above becomes essential, because it all contributes to the operational efficiency of the facility. Identifying the supply chain requirements, and sustainable practices supports the process. Operational efficiencies also contribute to higher Energy Star Ratings.

In summary, eliminating waste is good for the environment and the bottom line. With efficient products, tools and practices, cleaning crews are more efficient. They have more time for cleaning, which should be evident in buildings. How is the cleaning crew in your building doing? When was the last time a manager from your cleaning company updated you on their green practices and the impact on your building? At SparkleTeam, we are always happy to explain our green and sustainable practices, which provide health benefits to tenants and visitors; the environment too!

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