

Green Cleaning Decision is Made.

How Do You Implement?

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It is a decision that will eventually be made. Perhaps through your existing cleaning company or through a new one, specializing in Green Cleaning. Either way, Property Management is involved during the transition and implementation. How to do this most effectively? Stephen Ashkin, President of the Ashkin Group and member of the USGBC's LEED-EB Committee, is widely regarded as a top expert on Green Cleaning, and offers the following 4 tips for facility managers and building owners looking to adopt green cleaning policies, which have been supplemented with SparkleTeam's comments:

- **Work with knowledgeable vendors**

Inquire as to what vendors are doing a good job of providing green cleaning in your area, who are experienced in green cleaning. It's much easier to work with an experienced company than trying to teach a vendor who still works with traditional products. Experience with LEED-EB and the green cleaning "roadmap" it offers is a real plus.

- **Assess your current situation**

Before starting your program, determine your starting point by conducting a simple audit. This will help you recognize all opportunities for improvement and build a better plan. When creating or trying to work within your budget, remember that green cleaning products and services are competitively priced compared to traditional products, and you may find a better return on the investment.

- **Have a comprehensive plan**

Recognize that while simply switching to a few "green" products or equipment is a good thing, this is not enough. For best results, implement a comprehensive program that includes the chemicals, paper, equipment, entry mats, tools, etc. Take recycling into consideration. Over 80% of the cleaning budget is labor, so don't forget that the training provided by the company you select can make or break your program, yet remember they also need to make a profit, which should result in higher quality cleaning.

- **Buy-in from the building occupants**

The real objective of a green cleaning program is to help us become "stewards" of our buildings - caring for the structure, materials, finishes, office equipment, etc., while ultimately ensuring the well being of the people in our buildings. Being good stewards requires that individual occupants recognize and



take responsibility for their actions. For example, by properly separating their recyclables from the trash, or minimizing crumbs and other food sources that attract pests. Education and ongoing communication is essential to help everyone recognize that unless we each do our part, we can't create the healthiest, most productive building with the least environmental impacts.

The beauty of Green Cleaning is that we all reap health benefits by working in a clean environment. If you haven't quite crossed that bridge, SparkleTeam can take you by the hand and walk the bridge with you.

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