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Janitorial Service Considerations:

- Environmental and human health impacts of chemicals.
- Proper maintenance practices and schedules.
- Equipment efficiency, ergonomics, sound level, and maintenance.
- Safety and training of staff.
- Certifications
 - Cleaning Industry Management Standard for Green Building (CIMS-GB)
 - Green Seal Environmental Leadership Standard for Commercial Cleaning Services (GS-42)

Janitorial supplies, including chemical dispensing systems, can be purchased using a statewide contract with [Blind Industries & Services of Maryland \(BISM\)](#)

[BPO # 001B3400405](#)



Summer 2014 Focus: Janitorial Services

Why Require Green Janitorial Services?

In addition to using green janitorial supplies and equipment, green janitorial services provided by custodial staff play a large part in preventing harm to the environment and human health.

Traditional housekeeping services can present a number of hazards to custodial staff and building occupants - as well as potential damage to the building itself.

The human health risks include exposure to harmful chemical ingredients that may cause skin, eye or respiratory irritation, as well as diminished indoor air quality resulting from volatile organic compounds (VOCs) released when cleaning products are used.

Damage to building materials and finishes can result from the use of harsh cleaning chemicals and the improper handling of concentrates - as well as improper selection, use or maintenance of equipment.

A burden on communities and the environment is often created by product disposal, packaging waste and transportation costs when services are not conducted or procured in a sustainable manner. According to the [Environmental Protection Agency \(EPA\)](#), much time and expense may be required to properly handle and dispose of products with hazardous or regulated ingredients.

The [Building Owners and Managers Association \(BOMA\)](#) indicates that a growing concern of managers is whether their housekeeping service provider is capable of providing safe, sustainable cleaning. These risks and concerns can be mitigated through the use of green janitorial services.

What Makes Janitorial Services Green?

The EPA suggests that 'green cleaning' is commonly understood to be high quality janitorial or housekeeping standards with a reduced or eliminated risk to human health and the environment. With this focus on reducing risk for people and the planet, Environmentally Preferable Janitorial Services Specifications will soon be added to the Maryland Green Purchasing Committee [website](#).

The Winter 2014 Maryland Green Purchasing Committee newsletter examined the benefits of using green cleaning supplies, but there are additional factors involved when considering janitorial services and service providers.





The newest version of the [USGBC](#)'s LEED EBOM rating system requires green janitorial services as a prerequisite for certification. Both Green Seal GS-42 and ISSA CIMS-GB are acceptable 3rd party standards for meeting this requirement.



[Green Seal](#) is a non-profit organization that develops life cycle-based sustainability standards for products, services and companies, including nine standards for janitorial products and services.



The [Cleaning Industry Management Standard - Green Building \(CIMS-GB\)](#) requirements set forth a specific framework to ensure that an organization uses environmentally preferable cleaning practices.

Critical Components of Green Janitorial Services

- [Policy and Planning](#) - The first step in the creation of a green cleaning service is establishing policies aimed at addressing environmental and human health concerns. Long term planning considers methods for reducing or eliminating the risks mentioned above. Effective policy is an important tool for stating green cleaning goals and strategies.
- [Products, Supplies and Equipment](#) - Buying cleaners in concentrates with appropriate handling safeguards, and reusable, reduced, or recyclable packaging can be effective in reducing both costs and risks. Likewise, high efficiency equipment requires less electricity and reduced use of chemicals to achieve the same level of performance.
- [Procedures and Programs](#) - The specific cleaning procedures used by a service contribute to the overall level of sustainability. The procedures must consider waste reduction and efficiency gains without compromising a high standard of quality. Reusable microfiber cloths can reduce waste compared to disposable paper products, for example. However, the cloths should only be used a limited number of times and only in certain locations before being laundered.



- [Staff and Management Training](#) - Training of both custodial staff and management in green cleaning methodology ensures that policies are carried out as intended. Training must also highlight the benefits of green cleaning to custodial staff.

These components are each considered in the context of improving human health and environmental quality. Any measure which has the potential to reduce harm, waste, or pollution while achieving the benefits listed above will increase the level of sustainability for a service.

Green Cleaning Service Industry Certifications

Federal Executive Orders 13514 and 13423 require federal agencies to purchase environmentally preferable products and services. The State of Maryland, with the passage of [2014 HB 629](#), now requires state agencies to use environmentally preferable specifications published by the Maryland Green Purchasing Committee.

The U.S. Green Building Council's [Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design \(LEED\) Existing Building Operations and Maintenance \(EBOM\)](#) rating system requires green cleaning services as a prerequisite. Meeting this requirement can be achieved by using the industry standards below.

- Green Seal has used input from industry and the public sector to create [GS-42 Environmental Leadership Standard for Commercial Cleaning Services](#).
- The [International Sanitary Supply Association \(ISSA\)](#) has created the Cleaning Industry Management Standard Green Building (CIMS-GB) certification in order to provide a professional label for green cleaning services. This label was designed with LEED requirements in mind.

The [EPA 's guide on Environmentally Preferable Purchasing \(EPP\)](#) states that cleaning products often contain chemicals associated with eye, skin, or respiratory irritation, or other human health issues and that the concentrated forms of some commercial cleaning products are classified as hazardous, creating potential handling, storage, and disposal issues for users. Reducing human health and environmental concerns is an important incentive for implementing an EPP cleaning program.