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The Magazine for Today's Building

Cleaning Maintenance Executive

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A little common sense goes a long way in the cleaning process

From Volume 43, Issue 9 - September 2006

by: *Jim Fazzone, senior editor*

Every day, all across the world, people clean.

It's a fact of life.

I've even heard it said, if you're not cleaning, you're polluting.

If you think about it, that statement makes perfect sense.

If you've got a teenager living at home, just check out his/her bedroom and you'll see what I mean.

Cleaning projects come in all shapes and sizes — from a teenager's bedroom to schools and universities, hospitals, hotels and motels, and large commercial high-rise office buildings.

How does it get accomplished?

All too often, building service contractors and in-house facility directors hire big staffs, buy the most potent cleaning chemicals and floor finishes, invest in the fanciest vacuums and auto scrubbers and generally throw plenty of money at the task at hand — all at the expense of the client or the facility's budget.

Then, after the dust settles (pun intended), you've got to wonder if the facility in question has been cost-effectively cleaned.

In reality, what we are talking about here is productivity, better known in today's professional cleaning industry, and the business world in general, as: Doing more with less.

Cleaning consultant Perry Shimanoff, president of San Carlos, CA-based Management and Communication Consultants (MC2), offers a reality-based approach to the issue of productivity.

Shimanoff, who works with school districts and community colleges by conducting cleaning audits, staffing analyses and hands-on workshops, calls it the "work smarter, not harder" policy.

I call it, let common sense prevail.

The first work smarter, not harder principle that Shimanoff offers is: Clean water will serve you well.

Think about it for a minute. It seems obvious that using fresh water throughout the cleaning process is important, but how many times have you watched a custodian stretch that now dirty liquid as far as possible to avoid a trip to the utility sink?

Another of Shimanoff's work smarter, not harder principles is: Don't let it get dirty in the first place.

Maybe it's me, but it seems obvious that if you don't let the dirt and debris into your facility you won't have to clean as much. Somehow, that's not always the case.

But my favorite of Shimanoff's principles is: Duct tape isn't always the answer.

I won't spoil the fun of reading Shimanoff's entire article by telling you in this space what he discovered in his consulting travels.

Suffice to say, common sense, not duct tape, should have prevailed.

Send comments or thoughts on this topic or any other article that appears in CM/Cleaning & Maintenance Management® magazine, to jfazzone@ntpmmedia.com.

letters to the editor

To the editor:

In regards to your article, "A little common sense goes a long way in the cleaning process," (Sept. 2006, Page 8) I agree — to a certain extent.

I have consulted and cleaned many an establishment in my 25-year career. I have found young staff, janitors and owners mopping with dirty water, spreading the polymerization around the floor, and still wondering why the grout and tile don't come clean.

After years of training and teaching and training, I have been put in my spot. There is a product I was experimenting with, in my own company, to see if the results are as the manufacturer stated.

I put one ounce of this tea-colored powder in the bottom of the mop bucket, added the cold water to the mix, and presto, the mop water was instant dirt color.

After mopping the dirtiest floor I could find, and no other product seemed to work, including etching compounds, I was amazed at the results.

It actually cleaned the grout and tile to the extent no other product could do with this dirty mop water. The product was called RapidAll from Earth Alive.

So now I have to change my whole aspect of teaching and start from the beginning. There goes common sense!

Keep up the good work and I look forward to more great reading.

Edward West, CFST, RSO
Turbo Force Cleaning Solutions

To the editor:

I read with interest your article, "A little common sense goes a long way in the cleaning process" (Sept. 2006, Page 8). What got my attention is that we are out there "spreading the gospel" that you advocate. "Cleaning" with dirty water is not only a misnomer — it

makes NO sense.

In our development of the SuperGlide mop system, this became very apparent to us. Thinking about how mopping has been done for decades, it seems to be more of a redistribution of the dirt process rather than removal.

If you are not familiar with our system, it is the only one that has no dirty water component. The solution stays clean throughout the process, without the ability to expose a dirty or contaminated pad back into the clean solution.

Further, it utilizes 100 percent of water and chemical, with no waste component from dumping and rinsing.

I just really want to say a thank you for your article and attempts to make cleaning make sense.

David Greubel
VP, Professional Products
TxF Products

EDITOR'S NOTE — While CM/Cleaning & Maintenance Management® magazine is not in the business of endorsing either of the above products, it is nice to know that the professional cleaning industry can use "common sense" to adapt and get the job done the right way.

CM/Cleaning & Maintenance Management® magazine readers are encouraged to send letters to the editor. They must be dated, signed and include contact information. The editor reserves the right to edit letters due to space considerations. Letters to the editor can be sent to jjfazzone@ntpmedia.com.



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