



Four simple steps for housekeeping managers considering “going green”

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No...it is not a play on my last name (but maybe it should be!). It seems that both in the hotel industry and in general society, everyone is talking *green* these days, and for good reason. For housekeeping managers, there are many benefits to “going green”:

- Improve the hotel’s indoor air quality
- Increase employee productivity
- Improve morale (for everyone)
- Reduce sick days and associated healthcare cost
- Minimize exposure of aggressive chemicals
- Reduce water and air pollution
- Reduce waste with concentrated products
- Ensure healthier facility for guests and staff



However, some managers are still hesitant on developing and implementing a green cleaning program. For those who fit in that category here are some simple steps to help get you started:

1. **Create your own green library** - Obtain books, publications, websites, newsletters and etc. for you and your housekeeping team. It is very important for employees to understand the basics of green cleaning as well as for Management to create a resource for their continuous learning. A good starting point is a book called “Green Cleaning for Dummies” (available at www.ISSA.com). *Cleaning & Maintenance Management*® is also a great monthly publication magazine (www.cmmonline.com).
2. **Purchase green cleaning products** - Inventory the housekeeping department’s current cleaning products and determine what can be switched to a certified green product. By visiting www.GreenSeal.org and clicking on “Find a Certified Product/Service”, one will find product classifications for sanitation, cleaning and floor care products. These classification links will list the various manufacturers, the certified products’ names, and the green seal standard number for each item. With cleaning products you want to follow the GS-37 Standard. Hand cleaners must meet the GS-41 A & B guidelines, while floor-care products follow the GS-40 Standard. All the Green Seal standards are listed on the Green Seal.org website. Don’t forget to consider the dilution and mixing procedures as well as the disposal methods when switching to certified Green products.
3. **Use green paper/plastic products** - There are also two Green Seal standards for paper products: GS-1 and GS-9. Both standards are explained in detail on the Green Seal website. At the time of this article there is not a Green Seal standard for trash can liners. Although no standard is available, some vendors do provide trash liners that meet the published U.S. Green Building Council requirements. Work closely with your current vendor to see what options they have for paper and plastic liners. You may need to consider options such as rolled towels in place of multi-fold to reduce cost and consumption.
4. **Introduce green equipment** - Another great website is the Carpet and Rug Institute at: www.carpet-rug.org. While visiting this website one will find information about CRI Seal of Approval and Green Labeled equipment. By using certified equipment a hotel can increase the number of LEED points it earns. LEED is an acronym for the U.S. Green Building Council’s Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design rating system and certification program. This program encourages and accelerates global adoption of sustainable green building and development practices through the creation and implementation of universally understood and accepted tools and performance criteria.

All the steps listed above are just quick and simple steps to get any housekeeping manager started with going green. More information about Green Programs will be presented in future articles. ⇨

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