

Green Cleaning Policy

I. OVERVIEW

Consistent with Patchogue-Medford Library's commitment to sustainability and our goal "to minimize our organization's impact and maximize future generations' ability to live, work, and play in our shared natural environment," the Library aims to follow the New York State Office of General Services (OGS) Green Cleaning Guidelines and Specifications. Under New York State Executive Order 22, state agencies, public authorities and public benefit corporations are required to purchase cleaning products that meet environmental specification for hand cleaners/hand soap and industrial/institutional cleaning products. In addition, Chapter 584 of the Laws of 2005 (New York State Green Cleaning Program), requires all public and nonpublic elementary and secondary schools in New York to obtain and use cleaning products that reduce potential impacts to human health and the environment as compared with those of traditional cleaning products.

II. PURPOSE

The purpose of this document is to help administration maintain clean, healthy and safe buildings while simultaneously minimizing the impacts of cleaning processes, procedures, and products on the natural environment.

III. SCOPE

This green cleaning policy applies to all Patchogue-Medford Library buildings and covers the following:

- Cleaning products, including but not limited to, multi-purpose cleaners, bathroom cleaners, floor cleaner
- Soaps and hand sanitizers, including but not limited to, dish soap, hand soap and hand sanitizer
- Disinfectants and surface sanitizers
- Janitorial paper and plastic, including but not limited to, trashcan liners, toilet tissue and paper towels
- De-icing and snowmelt products
- Odor control products
- Urinal blocks
- Vacuums

IV. PRODUCT & EQUIPMENT STANDARDS

General Considerations

No dyes and fragrances

With the exception of odor control, products should be free of dyes and fragrances.

No Non-Aerosol Products

Most aerosol products produce toxic chemicals. Emissions from aerosol products are volatile organic compounds (VOCs) and sources of air pollution. In addition, aerosol cans are usually made from metal, which is a non-renewable, unsustainable resource.

Concentrated Products

When possible, the Library will purchase concentrated product to use with an automatic dilution system. Concentrates have less plastic packaging waste, less transportation costs and less environmental impacts. Automatic dilution equipment also prevents overuse and custodian exposure to product. Traditional sprays and wipes generally cost more to use than concentrate.

Recycled Content and Packaging

Part of reducing our environmental footprint and minimizing our organization's impact on the environment involves considering the type of packing and systems of delivery. Recycled packaging and closed loop systems of delivery are preferred.

Third-party Certification

When possible, third-party certification will be used to verify attributes of cleaning/janitorial products. Standards include [Green Seal](#), [UL Ecologo standards](#) and [EPA Saferchoice Standard](#). Third-party certification verifies low-toxicity and confirms performance.

Specific Product Guidelines

Air Fresheners

Air fresheners should be non-aerosol and made with natural ingredients such as essential oils. Systems using a subtle, continuous release of fragrance that is not distracting or overwhelming are preferred.

Cleaners

Cleaning products, including but not limited to multi-purpose cleaner, bathroom cleaner, glass cleaner and floor cleaners should meet one of the following standards:

- [Green Seal Standard 37](#) (which addresses all-purpose, glass, bathroom, carpet, and other biologically-active (enzymatic and microbial) products intended for routine cleaning of offices, institutions, warehouses, and industrial facilities)
- [UL 2792 - 2012 Standard](#) for Sustainability for Cleaning and Degreasing Compounds: Biologically-based

Dish Soap, Hand Soap and Hand Sanitizers

Soaps should be liquid, not foam. Hand soaps should not contain antimicrobial agents i.e. be labelled "antibacterial." According to a 2016 FDA ruling, antibacterial washes are not any more effective at preventing the spread of germs than plain soap and water. Soaps and hand sanitizers should meet one of the following standards:

- [Green Seal GS-41](#) for industrial and institutional hand cleaners
- [UL 2784 - 2011](#) Standard for Sustainability for Hand Cleaners
- [UL 2783 - 2011](#) Standard for Sustainability for Instant Hand Antiseptic Products
- [EPA Safer Choice standard](#) (dish soap)

De-icing and Snowmelt Products

De-icing And Snowmelt Products should meet the [EPA Safer Choice standard](#).

Disinfectants

The Library is committed to using disinfectants made with the safer active ingredients: **hydrogen peroxide, citric/lactic acid or ethanol/isopropyl alcohol**. Disinfectants must be listed on the [Environmental Protection Agency's List N](#) (Note: not all products on List N contain the safer active ingredients).

While it is possible to use a combined cleaner/disinfectant for those areas designated for both cleaning and disinfecting, this is discouraged. Combined cleaner/disinfectants can be about three times the price of general cleaners when considering the amount of product used at proper dilution. In addition, because the disinfecting ability depends on an already-clean surface and proper dilution, users may use more of the product than needed for general cleaning and risk over disinfect areas that do not need disinfection. Best practice is to use a general-purpose cleaner followed by spot disinfecting of high touch areas.

Paper & Plastic (Janitorial)

We use many paper products and commit to using Green Seal certified or EPA preferred towels and tissue. The use of post-consumer paper waste and recovered paper materials can reduce the impact of these materials in landfills and cut down on the use of virgin materials and save trees. Minimum post-consumer recycled content (PCRC) are 40% for paper towels and 20% for toilet tissue.

- Trash can liners should meet the [Green Seal GS-60 Standard](#).
- Toilet Tissue, paper towels & napkins should meet the [Green Seal GS-01 standard](#) or [UL 175 Standard](#) for Sustainability for Sanitary Paper Products.

Microfiber

Lint-free microfiber cloths and dusters are used when possible, instead of paper towels or cotton cloth. Microfiber products create an electrostatic force that attracts and holds dust particles better than other cloth ensuring that soil is not re-deposited on surfaces. Microfiber mops clean effectively, last longer, and reduce the amount of cleaning solution needed to perform the task. In addition, microfiber can be laundered and reused repeatedly.

Urinal Blocks

Urinal Blocks should meet [UL 2780 - 2011 Standard](#) for the Sustainability for Urinal Blocks

Vacuums

Vacuum cleaners should have high filtration systems and/or HEPA systems. HEPA filters improve indoor air quality by removing 99.9% of small air. In addition, vacuums must have the [Seal of Approval from the Carpet and Rug Institute](#) (CRI). Carpet extraction equipment, used for restorative deep cleaning should also be certified by the Carpet and Rug Institute's (CRI) Seal of Approval Testing Program.

V. CLEANING & DISINFECTION SCHEDULE

Daily Schedule

The following are cleaned daily:

- Glass doors in entryways cleaned
- Vestibules, lobbies and meeting room floors dust mopped
- Vestibules and lobbies wet mopped
- Carpets in entryways and high traffic areas vacuumed

- Debris and trash picked up from the grounds
- Trash removed

The following are cleaned AND then disinfected daily:

- Doorknobs, door handles, latches and push plates
- Light switches without motion sensors
- Hand railings
- Faucet handles
- Water fountains
- Public tables and computer stations
- Buttons on copy machines, elevators and microwaves
- Buttons and receivers on shared phones
- Shared desks/tables/computer stations
- Touch points on shared chairs
- Public computer keyboards and mice
- Kitchen counters and microwaves
- Dining tables
- Shared non-porous toys

In bathrooms:

- Stall door edges and locks
- Toilet handles and seats
- Urinal handles
- Baby changing tables

Weekly Schedule

The following are done on a weekly schedule:

- Sweeping and wet mopping of stairwells, kitchens, meeting rooms and other areas not done on the daily schedule.
- Interior glass walls and doors
- Washing vinyl furniture
- Dusting shelving, windowsills and televisions
- Scrubbing kitchen sinks
- Cleaning of elevator interior and exterior
- Checking for water-stained or spotted ceiling tiles
- Checking for burnt-out light bulbs and light fixtures not in working order
- Cleaning and disinfecting of inside of trash, sanitary receptacles

Monthly Schedule

The following are done on a monthly schedule:

- Exterior windows
- Vents dusted/wiped
- Walls spot cleaned/paint touched up
- Carpets spot cleaned
- Light fixtures dusted
- Windows washed
- Refrigerators emptied out and cleaned
- Washing outside of kitchen cabinets

Other Scheduled Cleaning/Maintenance

- Carpets are deep cleaned twice a year
- Septic systems are treated for drain flies quarterly
- Outdoor areas are cleaned with a high-pressure power washer annually

In the event of an infectious outbreak, disinfecting procedures may be revised/increased to meet current guidelines.

Inspections and Review

The Assistant Director and Custodial Supervisor will review practices and products annually and identifying opportunities for improvement and expansion of environmentally friendly practices. In addition, they will perform monthly inspections using the Levels of Cleanliness Checklist (Appendix A) to ensure the success of cleaning and maintenance processes.

Approved by the Board of Trustees June 17, 2025.

Cross Reference: Sustainability Policy

APPENDIX A:

LEVELS OF CLEANLINESS CHECKLIST

The word “clean” can mean different things to different people, which is why we use APPA’s levels of cleanliness, as outlined in their Custodial Staff Guidelines for Education Facilities, to define what clean is and to ensure that custodians understand what is expected of them. By knowing the level of clean requirements, custodians are better able to focus on meeting the requirements by adjusting their work activities. The following is a summary of key indicators. The lower the score higher the level of cleanliness.

Level 1 – Orderly Spotlessness

Level 1 establishes cleaning at the highest level.

- Floors and base moldings shine, and are bright and clean, and colors are fresh. There is no soil buildup in corners or along walls.
- All vertical and horizontal surfaces have a freshly cleaned or polished appearance with no accumulation of dust, dirt, marks, streaks, smudges, or fingerprints. Lights all work and fixtures are clean.
- Washroom and shower fixtures and tile gleam and are odor free. Supplies are adequate.
- Trash containers hold only daily waste, are clean and odor free.

Level 2 – Ordinary Tidiness

This is the base level upon which cleaning should be maintained. Lower levels are not acceptable.

- Floors and base moldings shine and are bright and clean. There is no buildup of soil in corners or along walls, but there can be up to two days worth of dust, dirt, stains or streaks.
- All vertical and horizontal surfaces are clean, but marks, dust, smudges, and fingerprints are noticeable upon close observation. Lights all work and fixtures are clean.
- Washroom and shower fixtures and tile gleam and are odor free. Supplies are adequate.
- Trash containers hold only daily waste, are clean and odor free.

Level 3 – Casual Inattention

This level reflects a lowering of normal expectations but we have not yet reached an unacceptable level of cleanliness.

- Floors are swept or vacuumed clean, but upon close observation, there can be stains. A buildup of dirt and floor finish in corners and along walls can be seen.
- There are dull spots or matted carpet in the walking lanes. There are streaks or splashes on base molding.
- All vertical and horizontal surfaces have obvious dust, dirt, marks, smudges, and fingerprints.
- Lamps all work and fixtures are clean.
- Trash containers hold only daily waste, are clean and odor free.

Level 4 – Moderate Dinginess

Areas are becoming unacceptable. The facility begins to constantly look like it requires a good “spring cleaning”.

- Floors are swept or vacuumed clean, but are dull, dingy, and stained. There is a noticeable buildup of dirt and/or floor finish in corners and along walls.
- There is a dull path and/or obviously matted carpet in walking lanes. Base molding is dull and dingy with streaks and splashes.
- All vertical and horizontal surfaces have conspicuous dust, dirt, smudges, fingerprints, and marks that will be difficult to remove.
- Less than 5% of lamps are burned out and fixtures are dingy and dirty.
- Trash containers have old trash and are stained and marked. Trash containers smell sour.

Level 5 – Unkempt Neglect

This is the final and lowest level. The facility is always dirty, with cleaning accomplished at an unacceptable level.

- Floors and carpets are dirty and have visible wear and/or pitting. Colors are faded and dingy, and there is a conspicuous buildup of dirt, dust, and/or floor finish in corners and along walls.
- Base molding is dirty, stained, and streaked. Gum, stains, dirt, dust balls, and trash are broadcast.
- All vertical and horizontal surfaces have major accumulations of dust, dirt, smudges, and fingerprints, as well as damage. It is evident that no maintenance or cleaning is done on these surfaces.
- More than 5% of lamps are burned out and fixtures are dirty with dust balls and insects.
- Trash containers are stained and marked. Trash containers smell sour.

RESOURCES

[Calculate Environmental Benefits of Buying Recycled Janitorial Paper](#)
[Carpet & Rug Institute Standards](#)

[Cleaning, Sanitizing, and Disinfecting for Child Cares: A Guide for Early Care and Education Providers](#)

[Environmental Paper Network](#)

[EPA Safer Choice standard.](#)

[EPA's List N](#)

[FDA issues final rule on safety and effectiveness of antibacterial soaps](#)

[Green Cleaning Can Help Schools Safely Open](#) by Alicia Culver

[Green Cleaning, Sanitizing, and Disinfecting: A Curriculum for Early Care and Education](#)

[Green Seal standards](#)

[Keep it Flowing: A Practical Guide to School Drinking Water Planning, Maintenance & Repair](#)

[Levels of Cleanliness](#)

[New York State approved green cleaning product list.](#)

[New York State Office of General Services green cleaning guidelines.](#)

[Responsible Purchasing](#)

[Safer Products and Practices for Disinfecting Surfaces](#)

[UL Standards](#)