



## Green Cleaning

### GETTING STARTED

#### What is green cleaning?

Green cleaning can be defined as “**cleaning that protects health without harming the environment.**”

The federal government has defined “green” and “environmentally preferred purchasing” as “...products and services that have a lesser or reduced effect on human health and the environment when *compared* with competing products and services that serve the same purpose.” -- *Executive Order 13101* which can be seen at [www.ofee.gov/eo/13101.htm](http://www.ofee.gov/eo/13101.htm).

Both definitions focus on the impact cleaning has on the health of people as well as the impact it has on the environment. Both definitions also describe a goal of striving to make sure cleaning has as positive an impact on human health and the environment as possible.

#### What does green cleaning mean to us?

Green cleaning is a comprehensive approach to cleaning that combines chemicals, equipment, tools, disposables, and, most importantly, processes, training, and communication to produce an effective and safe cleaning program.

#### How do I know what is “green” and what isn’t?

There are several third party organizations that define environmentally preferable ingredients, characteristics, and performance standards of products that we use to clean, as well as the buildings we are cleaning. Some of the most prominent and widely accepted guidelines include:





**United States Green Building Council (USGBC) LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Green Building Rating System:** The USGBC is a non-profit organization of representatives from across the building industry leading a national consensus for producing a new generation of buildings that deliver high performance inside and out. The USGBC's mission is "to promote buildings that are environmentally responsible, profitable and healthy places to live and work."

The USGBC has developed the LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Green Building Rating System, which is a voluntary, consensus-based national standard for developing high-performance, sustainable buildings. LEED was created to define "green building" by establishing a common standard of measurement and to stimulate "green competition."

**Bottom Line:** USGBC has created LEED to define what it takes to have a "green building". LEED-**EB** is for Existing Buildings and LEED-**NC** is for New Construction. LEED-**EB** offers credits toward green building certification for using green cleaning, and LEED-**NC** offers one innovation credit for submitting a written green cleaning policy. More information can be found at [www.usgbc.org](http://www.usgbc.org).

**The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA):** The EPA is a federal agency whose mission is "to protect human health and the environment." The EPA has established guidelines for the federal government concerning the purchase of materials called the Comprehensive Procurement Guidelines (CPG). This information can be found at [www.epa.gov/cpg](http://www.epa.gov/cpg). This standard recommends the minimum post consumer waste content a purchaser should request for products being purchased. The products that are referenced from the cleaning industry include disposable products like paper towels (40% post consumer waste content), toilet tissue (20%) [www.epa.gov/cpg/products/tissue.htm](http://www.epa.gov/cpg/products/tissue.htm), and trash bags (10%) [www.epa.gov/cpg/products/trashbag.htm](http://www.epa.gov/cpg/products/trashbag.htm).

**Bottom Line:** The EPA guidelines are referenced as the requirement to meet in the Sustainable Cleaning Products and Materials section of the LEED-**EB** Green Building Rating System.

**EPA Design for the Environment (DfE):** In addition to the aforementioned CPG, the EPA also has DfE, which is a partnership program that works with individual industry sectors to compare and improve the performance and human health and environmental risks and costs of existing and alternative products, processes, and practices. EPA supports using "benign by design" principles in the design, manufacture, and use of chemicals and chemical processes – a concept known as "green chemistry". For our industry, the DfE Green Formulation Initiative for Industrial and Institutional Cleaning Products has



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created a list of “green” ingredients for chemical formulators to use called CleanGredients™. The DfE is creating this data base in partnership with Green Blue Institute. Additional information can be found at [www.epa.gov/dfe](http://www.epa.gov/dfe), [www.greenblue.org](http://www.greenblue.org), and [www.cleangredients.org](http://www.cleangredients.org).

**Bottom Line:** The EPA DfE Program can be used to identify cleaning chemicals that have demonstrated an environmentally preferable profile.

**Green Seal:** Green Seal is an independent, non-profit organization that strives to achieve a healthier and cleaner environment by identifying and promoting products and services that cause less toxic pollution and waste, conserve resources and habitats, and minimize global warming and ozone depletion. Green Seal’s mission: “To achieve a more sustainable world by promoting environmentally responsible production, purchasing, and products.” Green Seal has standards for several categories including Industrial & Institutional Cleaners, Industrial & Institutional Floor-Care Products, Degreasers, Green Procurement Criteria, Green Facilities Operations and Maintenance Criteria, Paper Towels and Paper Napkins, and Tissue Paper, just to name a few.

**Bottom Line:** Green Seal certifies products and services that meet certain performance and environmental impact qualifications. The Green Seal GS-37 standard for Industrial & Institutional Cleaners is referenced as the requirement to meet in the Sustainable Cleaning Products and Materials section of the LEED-**EB** Green Building Rating System. More information can be found at [www.greenseal.org](http://www.greenseal.org).

**Carpet and Rug Institute Green Label Certification (CRI):** The Carpet and Rug Institute is the national trade organization representing the carpet and rug industry. In an effort to promote better indoor air quality, CRI has developed the Green Label certification for carpet, cushion, adhesives, and vacuum cleaners. To qualify for the Green Label, vacuum cleaners must go through a stringent testing process that measures three key performance factors: soil removal, dust containment, and carpet appearance retention. There is also a Seal of Approval certification for carpet extractors that measures cleaning effectiveness and residual moisture. More information can be found at [www.carpet-rug.org](http://www.carpet-rug.org).

**Bottom Line:** CRI Green Label vacuum cleaners, and other equipment that is demonstrably better for indoor air quality, are recognized and promoted in the Low Environmental Impact Cleaning Equipment Policy section of the LEED-**EB** Green Building Rating System.





## **What is a green cleaning program?**

A green cleaning program is one that combines environmentally preferred products with good sound cleaning procedures, training and expertise to create an effective and safe cleaning program.

## **Where can I go to learn more?**

|                                               |                                                                                                              |
|-----------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| US Environmental Protection Agency            | <a href="http://www.epa.gov">www.epa.gov</a>                                                                 |
| EPA Comprehensive Procurement Guidelines      | <a href="http://www.epa.gov/cpg/products.htm">www.epa.gov/cpg/products.htm</a>                               |
| EPA Tools For Schools                         | <a href="http://www.epa.gov/iaq/schools">www.epa.gov/iaq/schools</a>                                         |
| EPA Design for the Environment Program (DfE)  | <a href="http://www.epa.gov/dfe">www.epa.gov/dfe</a>                                                         |
| Green Blue                                    | <a href="http://www.greenblue.org">www.greenblue.org</a>                                                     |
| CleanGredients™                               | <a href="http://www.cleangredients.org">www.cleangredients.org</a>                                           |
| California Environmental Protection Agency    | <a href="http://www.calepa.ca.gov">www.calepa.ca.gov</a>                                                     |
| California Integrated Waste Management Board  | <a href="http://www.ciwmb.ca.gov">www.ciwmb.ca.gov</a>                                                       |
| Office of the Federal Environmental Executive | <a href="http://www.ofee.gov">www.ofee.gov</a>                                                               |
| Green Seal                                    | <a href="http://www.greenseal.org">www.greenseal.org</a>                                                     |
| US Green Building Council                     | <a href="http://www.usgbc.org">www.usgbc.org</a>                                                             |
| San Diego Chapter                             | <a href="http://www.usgbc-sd.org">www.usgbc-sd.org</a>                                                       |
| Orange County Chapter                         | <a href="http://www.usgbc-oc.org">www.usgbc-oc.org</a>                                                       |
| Los Angeles Chapter                           | <a href="http://www.usgbc-la.org">www.usgbc-la.org</a>                                                       |
| Arizona Chapter                               | <a href="http://www.usgbc.org/Chapters/arizona">www.usgbc.org/Chapters/arizona</a>                           |
| Las Vegas Chapter                             | <a href="http://www.usgbc.org/Chapters/lasvegas">www.usgbc.org/Chapters/lasvegas</a>                         |
| Colorado Chapter                              | <a href="http://www.usgbc.org/Chapters/colorado">www.usgbc.org/Chapters/colorado</a>                         |
| Northern California Chapter                   | <a href="http://www.usgbc.org/Chapters/northerncalifornia">www.usgbc.org/Chapters/northerncalifornia</a>     |
| Utah Chapter                                  | <a href="http://www.usgbc.org/chapters/organizing/utah.asp">www.usgbc.org/chapters/organizing/utah.asp</a>   |
| Idaho Chapter                                 | <a href="http://www.usgbc.org/chapters/organizing/idaho.asp">www.usgbc.org/chapters/organizing/idaho.asp</a> |
| Cascadia Chapter                              | <a href="http://www.usgbc.org/chapters/cascadia/default.asp">www.usgbc.org/chapters/cascadia/default.asp</a> |
| Center for a New American Dream               | <a href="http://www.newdream.org">www.newdream.org</a>                                                       |
| Collaborative for High Performance Schools    | <a href="http://www.chps.net">www.chps.net</a>                                                               |
| Healthy Schools Network, Inc.                 | <a href="http://www.healthyschools.org">www.healthyschools.org</a>                                           |
| Healthy Schools Campaign                      | <a href="http://www.healthyschoolscampaign.org">www.healthyschoolscampaign.org</a>                           |
| Hospitals for a Healthy Environment           | <a href="http://www.h2e-online.org">www.h2e-online.org</a>                                                   |
| Health Care Without Harm                      | <a href="http://www.noharm.org">www.noharm.org</a>                                                           |
| Green Hotels Association                      | <a href="http://www.greenhotels.com">www.greenhotels.com</a>                                                 |
| Green Restaurant Association                  | <a href="http://www.dinegreen.com">www.dinegreen.com</a>                                                     |
| Carpet & Rug Institute                        | <a href="http://www.carpet-rug.org">www.carpet-rug.org</a>                                                   |
| The Ashkin Group                              | <a href="http://www.ashkingroup.com">www.ashkingroup.com</a>                                                 |





**Some questions you may have:**

**Q:** “What do you know about green cleaning?”

**A:** Green cleaning can also be defined as cleaning that protects health without harming the environment. Green cleaning is about more than just green chemicals. A true green cleaning program also has appropriate equipment, tools, disposables, accessories, and perhaps most importantly, training on procedures.

**Q:** “What are your references?”

**A:** Depending on the products being proposed, several case studies exist that could be used as references. (It is also recommended that as successes be communicated and shared internally). One example of a case study is the LEED-**EB** certified Headquarters for JohnsonDiversey in Sturtevant, WI, which uses their Healthy High Performance Cleaning products and procedures. As a matter of fact four of the first six LEED-**EB** certified buildings are using a version of the HHPC process. In addition, WAXIE Sanitary Supply is currently involved in assisting several LEED projects.

**Q:** “What is your green product or service range?”

**A:** WAXIE offers several options of low environmental impact cleaning products, tools, and equipment, and in addition to recommending products, WAXIE can also provide training.

**Q:** “Are you familiar with USGBC & LEED? Are you a member?”

**A:** WAXIE is very familiar with USGBC and LEED. WAXIE Sanitary Supply is a member of the US Green Building Council (USGBC). In addition, WAXIE employs ten LEED Accredited Professionals, and the Green Partner Support Program™ can help contribute up to one-third of the credits required to certify a LEED-**EB** project. A “Green Housekeeping Program” can also assist a LEED-**NC** project.

**Q:** “How do your products differ from traditional products?”

**A:** It depends on the product. If it is a cleaning chemical, it will be safer for human use and it will have a more favorable environmental profile than a “traditional” product because it will be formulated without ingredients that have been demonstrated to have a negative impact on human health and the environment. If it is a disposable paper product or trash bag, it will contain a recommended amount of post consumer recycled content. If it is a piece of cleaning equipment, it will have active dust control, and if it is a vacuum cleaner, it will meet filtration requirements set by the Carpet & Rug Institute.





**Q:** “Are your green products certified?”

**A:** WAXIE offers certified products in several different categories. Some examples of third party certifications include EPA Comprehensive Procurement Guidelines for post consumer recycled content paper products and trash liners, Green Seal certification for cleaning chemicals, and Carpet & Rug Institute Green Label certification for vacuum cleaners. In addition, Green Seal has a certification for floor care products that WAXIE offers, and in the future, WAXIE could also offer cleaning chemicals with a certification from the EPA Design for the Environment (EPA DfE). In addition to certified products, WAXIE also offers product solutions in categories that are not currently “certified”, but which still demonstrate a lesser or reduced effect on human health and the environment.

**Q:** “What is your level of support on the street?”

**A:** WAXIE Sanitary Supply offers the support of the sales consultant, who is supported by all the resources of the company, including WAXIE sales management, WAXIE chemical and equipment specialists, as well as manufacturers’ vendor representatives.

**Q:** “How will you help me communicate the benefits to my customers?”

**A:** WAXIE can assist a building service contractor communicate the benefits of green cleaning to one of their customers by offering examples of case studies. In addition, a WAXIE sales consultant can assist in end user sales presentations.

**Q:** “What training programs do you offer?”

**A:** WAXIE offers training on green cleaning procedures in the form of the Butcher’s Healthy High Performance Cleaning Tool Kit. The procedures in this training program were developed at the LEED-**EB** Gold Certified JohnsonDiversey Global Headquarters Building in Sturtevant, Wisconsin.

**Q:** “If I am starting with a blank slate – how should I begin?”

**A:** You should begin with a site survey conducted by a WAXIE Sanitary Maintenance Consultant, who can make recommendations on how to make your cleaning operation “greener”.

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