

Low Cost = Green + Sustainable?

By: Arely Castellón, LEED Green Associate

Ask yourself honestly, what is the reality of incorporating green and sustainable practices in your facility? Given today's economy cost is paramount and the driving force for becoming more environmentally responsible and sustainable is dollar driven.

Often-times, cleaning is looked upon as a plain and simple service. Yet, what if it was looked at as a pro-active measure to reduce the need for costly cleaning services or products? What if the cleaning provided sustainable (and very possibly green) results that helped your bottom line?

Keep the Dirt Out!

Documented statistics from the ISSA Worldwide Cleaning Industry, estimate that 70-80% of dust, grime, and dirt in a building is tracked in from the outside on people's shoes, damaging carpet and floors. In addition, one square yard of carpet can accumulate one pound of dirt in just one week's time under normal weather conditions. A most surprising statistic is ISSA's estimate of the cost to remove one pound of dirt from a building, which is in excess of \$600 in cleaning costs.

Walk-off mats, placed at all entrances and exits, are the most effective way of stopping soil at the

door, thereby reducing building maintenance costs. Using mats made of recycled rubber or soda bottles near the exterior entrances are a great way to minimize the tracking. Not only are these mats attractive but also very practical as they can easily be rinsed to clean. Mats placed in the interior entrances collect additional dirt and soil, keeping the building floors and carpet cleaner. The cost for walk-off mats are very reasonable and serve a sustainable purpose!

Keep Restrooms Clean, Green, and Healthy!

Remember when it took a long time to dry your hands with a hand dryer? Not only that, but germs were being spread throughout! Today's hand dryers, have had a major technology upgrade and can dry hands three times faster than conventional dryers.

One study conducted by a hand dryer manufacturer found that for 1,000 hand dries, a high speed unit uses about 50 cents worth of electricity vs. \$20 of paper. An ISO assessment confirmed that some models can help reduce the carbon footprint of hand drying by 50 to 70% when compared to traditional hand dryers and paper towels. Very green, very sustainable, and less costly!

Extended-Life Floor Work

When comparing a tile floor that has been recently machine scrubbed to one that hasn't, the difference is very noticeable, particularly in the grout lines. The clean grout stands out, and helps to make the restroom appear clean overall. Unfortunately, with tight budgets, floor work is often times "stretched," to reduce expenses. At SparkleTeam, we have found a way to extend that clean look by sealing the grout upon completion of the machine scrub. This results in the tile remaining light for up to one year, depending on foot traffic. The use of a high-grade sealant provides a sustainable method to extend the clean appearance of existing tile and grout floors, and this sustainable action is definitely tied to cost savings!

With newer cleaning technology, the improved economics of going green and becoming more sustainable is worth considering at every facility. Talk to your cleaning service, or give SparkleTeam a call, and we'll develop a plan for your building.

