

Elon University
Green Cleaning Program

Purpose

Elon University is committed to providing a clean, safe and healthy environment for the students, staff and faculty who utilize its facilities. Green cleaning is an essential component to providing such an environment in that it reduces exposure of building occupants and maintenance personnel to potentially hazardous chemical and particle contaminants, which adversely impact air quality, occupant health and well-being and the environment. Green cleaning is a balance of effective and sustainable cleaning products, equipment and practices. This program is a component of Elon's commitment to sustainability through operations and education.

Scope

Elon's green cleaning program covers all normal cleaning activities undertaken in the course of managing Elon University facilities and addresses the following:

- Cleaning Chemicals
- Janitorial Products and Equipment
- Entryway Systems Maintenance
- Waste
- Education

Requirements

Cleaning Chemicals

Cleaning chemicals must be Green Seal certified (*Green Seal Industrial and Institutional Cleaners, GS-37 or Industrial and Institutional Floor-Care Products, GS-40*), certified under the EcoLogo Program of Environmental Choice or have the EPA's Safer Choice label (previously Design for the Environment, DfE).

If a particular product type is required and not available with the above certifications, then a product will be selected that is Green Seal recommended. If Green Seal recommended is not available, then a product will be selected that is "Environmentally Preferable" (*GS-42*) per Green Seal Environmental Standard for Cleaning Services.

Wherever possible, ready-to-use products shall be replaced with systems that can safely convert economical concentrations into ready-to-use solutions using re-usable containers.

The use of disinfectants shall be minimized and used only when needed at primary contact points (i.e., bathroom sinks, toilets, etc.).

Hand soaps do not contain antimicrobial agents (e.g. Triclosan).

Janitorial Products and Equipment

Paper products must meet Green Seal Standards (*GS-01 or GS-09*), which require tissue to be 100% recovered materials – including 20% post-consumer materials and towels to be 100% recovered materials – including 40% post-consumer materials.

Micro-fiber cloths shall be used for dusting and general cleaning activities. Micro-fiber dust mops shall be used as well as a microfiber mopping system. No chemical treated cloths shall be utilized.

All newly purchased vacuum cleaners shall meet or exceed the Carpet and Rug Institute (CRI) requirements for efficiency and shall operate at a sound level of less than 70 dBA.

Vacuum cleaners shall have HEPA or high-filtration systems to contain particulate matter and be ergonomically designed.

Carpet extraction equipment shall be capable of removing sufficient moisture such that carpets can dry in less than 24 hours.

Power floor maintenance equipment shall be equipped with controls or other devices for capturing and collecting particulates and shall operate at a sound level less than 70 dBA.

Power scrubbing machines shall be equipped with a control method for variable rate dispensing to optimize the use of cleaning fluids.

Trash and recycling liners shall contain at least 50% recycled content.

Automatic aerosol deodorizers shall be eliminated because they contain volatile organic compounds (VOCs). Non-aerosol air freshening systems shall be used instead.

Urinal blocks shall be eliminated because they contain hazardous materials. Urinal screens without deodorizer blocks can be substituted.

Entryway Systems Maintenance

All major entrances shall have an entrance matting system (or grate) to reduce the introduction of outdoor pollutants. These entryway systems shall be cleaned weekly.

Waste

Trash and recycling shall be collected from facilities on a routine basis.

Elon's recycling program applies to all University facilities.

Environmental Services staff shall separate and recycle all waste items from cleaning operations, including paper, glass, plastics, cardboard and other packaging materials as applicable.

Chemicals shall be purchased in concentrates with appropriate handling safeguards and reusable, reduced or recyclable packaging.

Education

All Environmental Services personnel shall go through a training program including material handling, product usage and disposal and safety training. This training will be provided upon employment and on a routine basis (yearly) to ensure all personnel are familiar with and comfortable with the cleaning products and procedures. Appropriate recycling procedures shall be covered in this training as well.

Building users and occupants shall be informed of the green cleaning program and its health and environmental benefits.

Occupants are provided the opportunity to give feedback through Elon's online work request system. All faculty, staff and students can submit work requests, which can include a specific request or general feedback. When a work request is completed, the requestor receives a follow-up online survey to determine his/her satisfaction with the response to the work request. Work requests and satisfaction survey results are shared with appropriate personnel and management who determine if changes are needed (e.g., schedules, procedures, staff, etc.).

Procedures

Cleaning must be conducted on a routine basis; this includes removing trash and recyclables.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) must be worn when mixing cleaning concentrations.

Cold water shall be used for dilutions.

To reduce the number of products used, multi-purpose cleaners will be used wherever possible.

Before all major cleaning operations, facility occupants shall be informed of the scheduled time and given any other applicable information.

Cleaning shall be conducted such that there is sufficient time for surfaces to properly dry before being occupied by high volumes.

Existing vacuum cleaners shall be phased out as soon as possible.

All cleaning chemicals must be stored in isolated areas of the building, i.e., a janitorial closet with access limited to Environmental Services personnel only. Janitorial closets must be organized and kept clean.

Hot and cold water supplies must be maintained and drains plumbed for appropriate disposal of liquid waste and kept functioning properly.