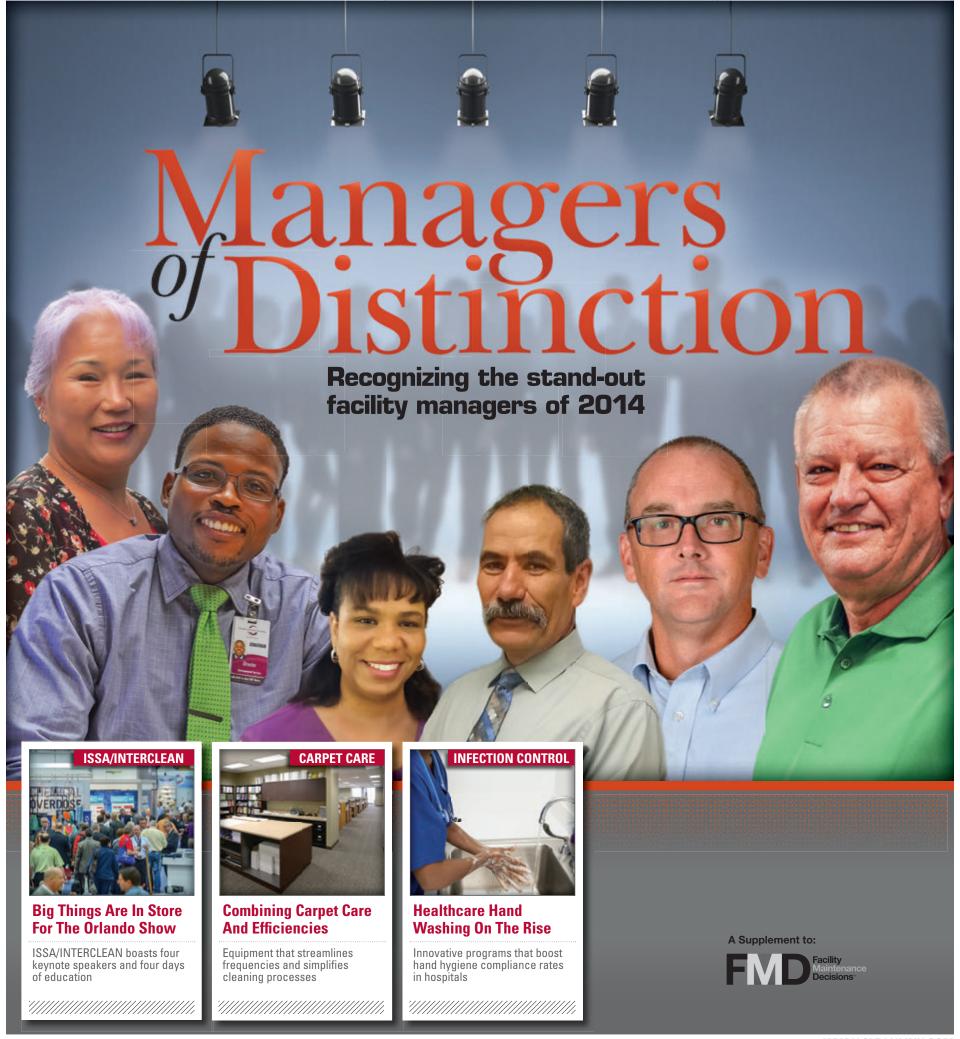
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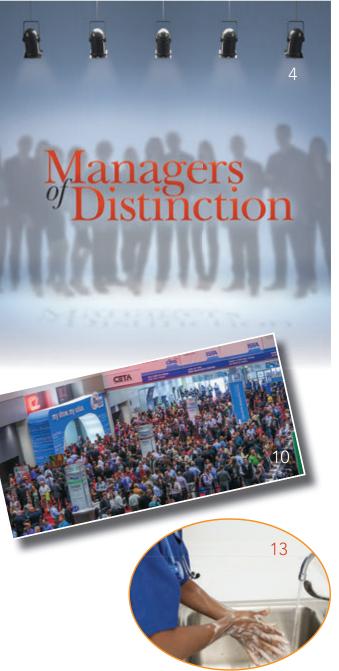






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Corinne Zudonyi

Lead By Example, Your Staff Is Watching

People often tell me that I remind them of my mother. Honestly, I take that as a complement. My mom is honest, hardworking, compassionate and very determined. Both my parents have instilled these same traits in me.

But isn't that how it works? Aren't we shaped by the experiences and the examples of others? I like to think that we see the best in people and then work to mirror those attributes both personally and professionally.

Just as my parents have helped influence the person I have become, my work has been sculpted by the managers and mentors I've had the pleasure to work with over the years.

That said, I am sad to report that my boss plans to retire at the end of the year. You may not know him, but he has been with our company for almost 40 years, and his influence helped launch this publication and shape it into what it is today.

If you were acquainted, you'd know that he is quite the wordsmith, has a keen eye for design and has a very clever wit. And it is through his supervision that I have learned to be a better editor and a better leader.

As managers within your facilities, you can relate that it isn't always easy to be a strong leader. You don't need to be the very best floor technician, or the quickest at disinfecting a restroom. But you better be able to jump in when necessary. As a strong leader, you need to know your people, how they work and how they communicate.

A strong manager is a cheerleader for the department and they know how to listen. But more than anything, they lead by example because that's what staff will mirror. That last point was the overwhelming similarity of the six winners of our first Managers of Distinction Award. Traditionally, if you ask six people what makes a good leader, you'll get six different answers. But for our winners (outlined on p. 4), they all agree that demonstrating a certain quality of customer service is a must for strong leaders.

We owe it to ourselves, and our staffs, to be the best leader we can be. There is always someone watching, studying and picking up the best in you so that they can, one day, mirror those strengths when they become manager.

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Find more info online at

CleanLink

CleanLink Gets A Makeover

CleanLink users might notice that the site features a fresh new look, but still delivers the same quality content readers have come to expect. That content is now structured in a way that makes searching for information easier. Daily news offerings and industry management tips, as well as the most recent and pertinent articles, have been given top billing on the homepage — giving users the most timely information right away. Our varying product category pages in the top nav can also be a quick tool for users searching for specific information.

......

Those searching the site on their mobile devices will also notice substantial upgrades. The site is now fully mobile and will adjust to the device, making reading and searching for content a breeze. Check out the new offerings at **www.cleanlink.com**

Do you work with a best-in-class jan/san distributor sales rep?

In February 2015, our sister publication, *Sanitary Maintenance*, plans to give some well-deserved attention to the leading distributor sales reps in the industry. If you work with a distributor that deserves recognition, we encourage you to submit a nomination at **www.cleanlink.com/salesleaders**. Deadline for submissions is Dec. 1.

Infection Control: Best Practices to Combat the Spread

As viruses like RSV, C.diff, and MRSA become more resistant, the proper cleaning tools and procedures are vitally important to eradicating outbreaks. This webcast provides an in-depth understanding of universal practices and methods of combating the spread of infection in a variety of settings. The result: a healthier working environment for building occupants, increased morale, reduced absenteeism and greater productivity. For more information on this and other industry webcasts, visit **www.cleanlink.com/webcasts**

Industry News

Breaking news — including people and company announcements and case studies — is published daily at **www.cleanlink.com/news**. Save yourself a trip to the site by signing up for the weekly news email at **www.cleanlink.com/visitorcenter** or follow *Facility Cleaning Decisions* on Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn or Google+.

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Langersions Of Langers Of Langers

Recognizing the stand-out facility managers of 2014

By Corinne Zudonyi, Editor

THEY COME IN DURING the early morning hours, work behind the scenes and often leave long after the last building occupant. Custodial operations personnel have, historically, been dubbed the "invisible workforce." Yet, they are the lifeblood of an organization — the individuals that keep the facility looking and running up to 21st century standards.

In recognition of the role these professionals play, Facility Cleaning

Decisions has launched the Managers of Distinction Awards.

The six individuals profiled here were chosen from the roughly 100 nominations submitted by our readers. These executives stood out for their management style, organizational achievements, above-and-beyond job performance, and their role in contributing value to both the facility and the profession as a whole.

Technological Maven

Brian Tallmadge Assistant Chief, Environmental Management Ralph H. Johnson VA Medical Center

As a former drill sergeant in the U.S. Army, Brian Tallmadge knows a thing or two about coaching, counseling and men-

toring, and he applies that knowledge everyday as assistant chief of environmental management. It is that leadership at Ralph H. Johnson VA Medical Center, Charleston, South Carolina, that has produced patient satisfaction scores well above target levels and

cleanliness levels exceeding the threshold outlined by program developers.

"Brian is a dedicated EVS manager who does more with less, focuses on reducing costs, increasing performance, lowering infection rates and increasing patient satisfaction scores," says Patrick Barry, chief of environmental management services.

Tallmadge sets high expectations for his staff and encourages them to rise to the challenge. But it is his determination to introduce new cleaning technologies that sets him apart.

"My biggest pet peeve is when you ask someone why they are doing something and they answer, 'because we've always done it that way,'" says Tallmadge. "You can't become complacent. You have to challenge levels and raise expectations to keep everyone safe."

> Tallmadge has introduced a number of technological advancements to help meet those expectations. One example is a restroom alert system, outfitted in 35 of the high-traffic restrooms on site. The program alerts Tallmadge and his supervisors whenever a restroom

issue is identified, allowing them to deploy staff and service where needed.

Introducing this program streamlined productivity and also identified a few areas of improvement for the department. For example, Tallmadge noticed that roughly 50 percent of the alerts were consumables driven. This confirmed that the staff was doing a great job cleaning restrooms, but they needed to focus more on stocking towels, tissue and soap — which ultimately reduced the amount of alerts, and improved customer satisfaction.

that sets min apart.

Tallmadge stands by his team to celebrate successes When it comes to introducing technology into the department, Tallmadge says he doesn't want to keep up with the Joneses. He wants to be the Joneses.

"Following is great, but leading and innovating is better," he says. "We are the frontline in caring for veterans and their families, and we are blessed to have the budget to afford technologies that help us do that."

That budget, and the support from senior management has allowed Tallmadge to purchase ultraviolet units to improve disinfection, new floor equipment that streamlines cleaning/finishing, and restroom equipment that helps with deep cleaning.

Barry comments that through his leadership, training, and by incorporating various technologies into the department, Tallmadge has expanded the capabilities and competencies of his staff, all while saving the department tens of thousands of dollars annually.

"I believe that if you incrementally increase staff responsibilities and provide them the proper tools to complete the tasks, they will outperform your expectations," says Tallmadge.

In terms of expectations, Tallmadge has surpassed those of Barry.

"Brian's innovation and knowledge of emerging technologies has taken our medical center to new levels of cleanliness and customer service," says Barry.

In response, Tallmadge says, "I don't claim to know or be the best at everything. I just like to learn, improve and try new things. I won't allow myself, or my staff, to become complacent. It's important to remember why we are doing what we are doing."

Humble And Hardworking

Yang Sook Choe Custodial Manager Of Operations University of Washington

Yang Sook Choe shuns the limelight — even though she has every right to bask in it.

"Yang Sook is very humble and doesn't do this work for the recognition," says Gene Woodard, director of building services at University of Washing-

ton, Seattle. "She does it because she wants the organization to be the very best it can be. She lives and breathes it."

As the custodial manager of operations, Choe exudes passion

exudes passion for her work and considers UW her home. It has been that way since she first started as a custodian on campus roughly 28 years ago.

"I know each and every corner of campus," she says. "My heart beats when I walk in. I am married to this place."

That marriage has served both parties very well. Over the years, and after displaying obvious leadership traits, Choe has moved up the ranks into management, where her true talents continue to drive the cleaning mission on campus.

Having been in their shoes, Choe









knows exactly how to lead her team of more than 60 employees as they clean the entire 12-million square feet of the Seattle campus. The combination of an extensive and efficient training program on campus and Choe's hands-on demonstrations, communicate exactly what Choe expects from her staff. And according to Woodard, the example she is setting is more than just how to do a job.

"Her staff knows and takes pride in the fact that Yang Sook is working even harder than they are, so they rise to the occasion time and again," he says. "She works her team hard, but no one ever wants to leave once they start working with her."

Working with Choe means being open to new projects and giving your all. During her time at UW, Choe has embraced new opportunities with enthusiasm and determination. When asked recently about taking on additional project crews and shift teams, she readily accepted and quickly went about making improvements in work schedules, safety and services — even though it meant cutting into her personal time.

"I am a go-getter," she says. "I don't see these things as challenges. They need to get done. What some might see as a challenge, I see it as an opportunity."

And Choe can be very opportunistic.

For example, commuting to and from the office during winter months, paying for parking and then walking - often in the dark — to check into work was challenging for much of Choe's staff. In fact, the commute not only strained personal budgets (parking on campus is over \$100 a month), but inclement weather often resulted in worker absenteeism.

Realizing commuting was a challenge for her staff, Choe set out to make a change. She launched and championed the UW vanpool to aid her staff in the commute.

For less than \$5 a month per person, the vanpool has helped nearly 150 staff members commute to and from work, on time, with ease. The vanpool not only parks for free closer to the main office area, making the walk safer for staff, but Choe's idea has also improved communication and camaraderie among workers, since riders have a 20-minute drive each way with nothing to do but talk.

"Yang Sook spearheading this program has reduced stress on parking spaces and single-occupied vehicles on campus," says Woodard. "It has also helped reduce greenhouse gas emissions and complies with the sustainability initiatives on campus."

Choe is described as both a thinker and a doer — a person that has high expectations for herself and the department.

"The results are extremely clean buildings and high customer satisfaction," says Woodard. "Yang Sook's work ethic is the ideal state for others to strive for, and her team lives up to her high standards with pride."

Gene Woodard (L) and Scott Spencer (R) celebrate Yang Sook Choe for her "dedication to achieving the mission of the department and her uncanny leadership and organizational skills.





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Custodial Keeper

Victor Tovar General Manager of Custodial Services, Main Campus and Health Sciences Center University of New Mexico

It has been two years since the executives at the University of New Mexico, in Albuquerque, decided to move custodi-

al operations in-house. But that change was only possible because it also included bring Victor Tovar, the now general manager of custodial services for the main campus and Health Sciences Center, on board.

"When he was hired on, all the custodial staff got up and cheered. Everyone was

thrilled," says Gary Smith, associate director for environmental services and maintenance and operations.

They were thrilled because they knew Tovar from his 22 years on campus working with the building services contractor. They knew him as a hardworking, dedicated, problem-solving manager, and all were optimistic that he was the right person to continue driving the cleaning mission on campus.

"We were going to do whatever it took to keep Victor," says Smith. "He was going to stay and we weren't going to take no for an answer."

> Now working directly for UNM, Tovar comments that there are more opportunities to grow, excel and make improvements than were available to him before.

"I am very goal orientated and I take the job to a new level by developing a plan of action and setting goals," he says.

During his time at UNM, Tovar introduced team cleaning initiatives to improve worker productivity. He also lead the custodial department to take over cleaning the food service areas, and proposed expanding operations beyond the main campus to also include the health sciences area.

He also found a passion for training his staff, and developed a training facility fully stocked with every fixture, flooring type and surface the staff would be expected to clean on campus.

"When you are leading people, you want them to understand you, look at projects through your eyes and do the work as you would have," says Tovar. "There is no better way to do that then working with them to demonstrate what you want them to do."

That mind-set stems from experiences that have helped shape Tovar into the manager he is today.

Tovar did have it rough early on — living on the streets. It was a concerned mentor that helped him get into boxing, where he learned hard work, self-discipline and confidence.

After going pro for a short stint, and even winning a Golden Glove, Tovar found a new passion and saw an opportunity for growth in the custodial industry. He was also introduced to some great leaders that helped him come out of his shell and go after opportunities.

"I was bottled up with all these ideas, but didn't know how to approach sharing them," says Tovar. "My manager at the time encouraged me to take a public speaking class and it opened up the other side of the world for me. I could talk in front of people and I saw their reactions to what I was saying was positive."

After that, Tovar hit the books -



Victor Tovar conducts regular training sessions with his custodial services team

researching, reading and studying industry periodicals — and used his mom's advice of treating people the way he wanted to be treated to progress into the management ranks.

"Being a manager takes a lot of hard work, dedication and perseverance," says Tovar. "My goal is to capitalize on every opportunity and make big shoes, so it would take a lot for someone to ever take over this position."

Compassionate Leader

Monique Walker Director of Housekeeping Vi at Grayhawk

Vi at Grayhawk, a senior living community based in Scottsdale, Arizona, functions on three core values: Integrity, Com-

passion and Excellence. All are values that Monique Walker, director of house-keeping, believes in and practices everyday.

"Monique shows integrity by leading by example and practicing what she preaches," says Stephanie Estes, human resources generalist. "Her compassion is

obvious through her smile and kindness in working with staff and residents. And Monique never accepts less than exceptional results and never delivers less than exceptional customer service."

Walker not only practices these values personally, she teaches them to her staff. Through focus groups with her team, she encourages the staff to discuss examples of what they have done to show compassion, and she outlines her expectations in terms of excellence.

Walker does set high expectations for her custodial staff because she firmly

believes the residents deserve the very best in care. But she also does it to help make those members of her team the best they can be, because she truly cares for each of them and enjoys watching them grow.

"I believe that each of us should prac-

tice to be better today than we were yesterday," says Walker. "Doing so will help us grow both personally and professionally."

According to Estes, Walker sets a great example for her staff, taking difficulty in stride and maintaining a great attitude. When difficult situations arise, she

puts herself in the staff's shoes and treats them the way she would like to be treated. Whether the challenge is at work, or in their personal lives, Walker will do what she can to help.

"I know people struggle and have stressful lives outside of work," she says. "If I can find resources to help them, I will go above and beyond to do so."

For example, when an employee needs to take time for themselves or their family, Walker takes it upon herself to sit in on the entire Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) process. She does so to make sure

they fully understand their rights, have everything they need, and that they get answers to their questions.

"I might understand what that paper says, but there will be those people that don't," says Walker. "We offer a lot to our staff and I want to make sure each has a

full understanding of every benefit."

Estes comments that going beyond the call of duty like this shows true compassion and that Walker cares for the needs of her employees. But her warmth doesn't end there. Walker also treats the occupants with tenderness, building rela-

tionships and giving them the best customer service she can.

"Monique is always walking through the community dusting, picking up trash and checking services," says Estes. "But as she goes, she is also talking to the residents."

Whether it is just a "good morning," a chat about a loved one, or an inquiry about something they are watching on television, Walker makes a point to interact with the residents. She builds relationships as she and her staff tidy up their rooms, help fold laundry or open the shades to let the light in.

"I feel like the residents are my extended family," says Walker. "We are here

everyday and are able to do what their children sometimes can't do. It's important to me to do everything in my power to help. It makes me happy to have happy staff and residents."

But not everything about her job is happy. Walker comments that the



Monique Walker does everything she can to support her staff

compassion she has for the residents is also one of her biggest challenges. The community welcomes everyone from active residents to those needing endof-life care, and it is difficult to watch residents go through that transition.

"That's really hard," says Walker. "It's heartbreaking to watch an active, vibrant individual decline in health."

The compassion that Walker shows for her work, her staff and the residents is always on display.

"The residents love Monique and her employees respect her," says Estes. "She cares about them and is always smiling."

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No "I" In Team

Jonathan Cooper Environmental Services Director Orlando Health Central Hospital

Jonathan Cooper leads by example, not from a desk. And he is certainly no

stranger to getting his hands dirty. Having worked his way up through the ranks in custodial operations, Cooper uses his past frontline experiences to teach his crew at Orlando Health Central Hospital, Ocoee, Florida, to be the very best they can possibly be.

Shortly after starting at

the hospital, Cooper developed an Environmental Services philosophy: "Provide exceptional service to every patient and their family, every day, every time, with the spirit of warmth, friendliness and personal pride." It is a mantra that he passionately embraces.

"I love and am dedicated to that philosophy and to the hospital's vision," says Cooper. "I walk with it and train my team to walk with me."

Two common goals bring the team together: patient care and satisfaction. Cooper makes it his team's responsibility to guarantee every patient's needs are met and

> they are more than satisfied with their care. It's important to him that the goals extend to the family, as well.

"Jonathan is routinely going above and beyond for the patients, guests and the staff at the hospital," says Michael Hassell, safety and protective services manager.

He cites an example of

when a patient came in for a critical procedure and had a very large family in tow. The family lacked the funds for a hotel stay. And learning of this, Cooper and his team took it upon themselves to provide and set up sleeper chairs in the waiting area, complete with pillows and blankets.

This is how we can expect Jonathan to act in his leadership capacity," says Hassell.

His passion for helping patients and leading by example to create a safe and clean environment has paid off. Just over year ago, the hospital started it's

eight-month stint as one of the top 10 hospitals in the country for patient satisfaction — and is trending to be ranked again.

In March, the department also received the most successful Joint Commission survey ever, and was dubbed by survey-

ors as "the cleanest hospital they've ever seen."

"Sometimes you don't think you are making an impact," says Cooper. "But then you have a patient call to thank you, or you have a reason to give kudos to the staff — that's when you know it is all worth it."

Recognizing the staff and offering them advancement opportunities is something Cooper feels passionate about.

'The team really cares about the job they do and the families they serve, and

they deserve recognition for their hard work," he says. "We also offer potential for growth into leadership positions. Spending time with the team and offering



Jonathan Cooper never asks his staff to do anything he wouldn't do himself

areas for development and growth is what it's all about as a manager.'

Cooper makes no bones about the fact that the members of his EVS team are his greatest asset. It is that attitude that Hassell says makes working with Cooper such a pleasure.

"He brings a spirit of camaraderie and teamwork to the department," says Hassell. "It is a privilege to work alongside a fellow manager/director who so completely embodies the idea of going the extra mile and doing things right."

Owners Mentality

Leon Spielbusch **Facilities Director East Valley Institute** of Technology

When Dr. Sally Downey transferred from Oklahoma to become the superin-

tendent and CEO of East Valley Institute of Technology, in Mesa, Arizona, she knew who she wanted to bring with her to manage the facilities.

"The one thing you look for and try to accomplish when putting together a winning team are members that have buy-in into the organi-

zation and treat it as their own," says Dr. Downey. "Leon Spielbusch not only keeps our school clean and well maintained, but he treats it like he owns it."

That owner mentality is something Spielbusch, facilities director at the school, has developed over time. Prior to joining the EVIT team, he owned quite a few different businesses: a western auto store, a construction company and he briefly got into aluminum can recycling. He even purchased a plane that he then leased out to a flight school. And at one point, Spielbusch also worked as a meter reader for the electric company and even oversaw a team working on accounting software — which is where he met Dr. Downey.

Through these experiences, Spielbusch has honed his skills in construction, man-

agement and energy, and he's learned what it takes to manage a budget and a team.

"I've worn several hats. It's been fun," he says. "It has all provided great background for this position."

Just like he did when he managed his own businesses, Spielbusch loves identifying challenges and working to

find solutions that benefit the organization. And with 10,000 visitors a year, 4,000 students, a 77-acre campus and only 13 on the custodial staff, he experiences his fair share of challenges at EVIT.

For example, keeping cleaning standards up to par with a minimal staff is not easy. But Spielbusch manages his budget the same way he would as if he were the owner. He chooses to keep staff numbers down, so he can afford to pay them an acceptable wage. Then he outfits the department with appropriate technology

and equipment that help capitalize on productivity. Arming the staff with the equipment to properly do their job, and paying them appropriately keeps them happy and working hard.

Dr. Downey is pleased with Spielbusch's mind-set on spending, and the results of his team. She says the school is "pristine" and those that visit often comment

on the cleanliness and maintenance of the campus. She credits Spielbusch for the quality of work, saying he treats the facility as if he owns it, and it shows.

"You never see any gum," she says. "That's rare out here, but it would leave a spot even after it was removed."

Gum is a stigma that Spielbusch doesn't tol-

erate. If seen, it is immediately removed and the spot is tended to, in hopes of being eliminated as quickly as possible. If students are seen dropping gum, they are asked to use trash receptacles and reminded that it takes everyone's help to keep EVIT clean.

"We set a standard for clean and we try to lead by example," says Spielbusch. "If myself and my staff are conscious of cleanliness, everyone follows suit."

Taking further ownership into the

school, Spielbusch will jump in to help when necessary, even if it involves tasks outside the cleaning realm. For example, interest in this career and college prep school has grown quickly in recent years, requiring new construction. Using his past work talents, Spielbusch helped lay drywall and paint.

"I did that with my staff over the



Leon Spielbusch is a multitasker that works with his team to get the job done

summer to make sure it was ready for the start of school," he says.

According to Dr. Downey, Spielbusch will do whatever it takes to help out and keep the department moving forward.

"I am not an expert over everything Leon does, but I have total confidence and trust in the decisions he makes and I've never been disappointed," she says. "Everyone has pride in our campus and it starts with Leon." **FCD**

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By Nick Bragg

RIDING THE COATTAILS of last year's successful show in Las Vegas that drew the most attendees in nearly a decade, ISSA is expecting a record turnout for ISSA/INTERCLEAN North America 2014.

"Everywhere attendees look, they will find the event is about more, more, more. More exhibitors, more co-located events, more keynote speakers, more days of education," says Dianna Steinbach, director of industry outreach for ISSA.

Taking place November 4-7 at the Orange County Convention Center in

Orlando, Florida, more than 16,000 inhouse service providers, jan/san distributors and building service contractors will get the opportunity to network, learn, and visit with a record of more than 700 exhibitors from roughly 30 countries.

"ISSA/INTERCLEAN North America is the best opportunity to experience first-hand, all the latest products, equipment and innovations the industry has to offer," says Fritz Gast, ISSA president and executive vice president of P.B. Gast & Sons, Grand Rapids, Michigan.

Abundance Of Education

This year, ISSA is returning to the Tuesday through Friday format with the trade show floor open Wednesday through Friday. More than 40 educational seminars will be offered on all four days, including a first — educational sessions after the show floor closes on Friday, Nov. 7.

The educational seminars and workshops presented throughout the four-day exhibition cover a wide array of topics. On Tuesday, learn about success through sustainability, strengthening







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your cleaning team, hiring Millennials, the future of green and more.

"What a great way to give attendees timely and much needed career development and continuing education," says Gast.

Education continues on the show floor Wednesday through Friday at the ISSA Education Theater. Topics include tips to strengthen front-line staff, technology advancements and their impact on departments, new green cleaning trends, workplace safety and more.

Finally, after the show wraps on Friday, facility executives can learn about professionalism and the 10 trends shaping the cleaning industry.

Last year ISSA had three keynote speakers and located them right in the exhibit hall to centralize the attendee experience. After receiving a lot of positive feedback, the decision was made once again to locate the speakers in the exhibit hall, but up the ante to four presenters having a keynote speaker on Wednesday and Thursday, and two speakers on the final day of the exhibition for what ISSA is billing as the "Friday Finale."

Susan Erschler, Fortune 500 executive and famed mountain climber, will present "Conquering the Seven Summits of Peak Performance" on Wednesday. Marcus Buckingham, author of the business bestseller "First, Break All The Rules," will present "Find Your Edge" on Thursday.

The Friday Finale tips off with champion basketball coach Rick Pitino presenting "The One Day Contract" before the exhibit hall opens. When the exhibit hall closes at 1 p.m., the final keynote, boxing champion Sugar Ray Leonard, will tie his message of excellence, "The Power to Win," into the new ISSA Excellence Awards Luncheon.

Attendees are encouraged to attend this complimentary luncheon with industry leaders as the ISSA Innovation Award, Best Customer Service Award, and ISSA Member Milestones recipients will be recognized. The luncheon is free for attendees, but they need to RSVP when registering for the show to secure one of the limited seats. As an added bonus, multiple pairs of boxing gloves autographed by Leonard will be raffled off.

Network With Peers

This year, ISSA/INTERCLEAN North America's theme is "The One Show for Facility Solutions," due to the fact that it is the one show where the entire industry comes together, including five different co-located events by industry associations.

Co-hosting their annual conventions again this year are IEHA, Building Service Contractors Association International (BSCAI), and the Association of Residential Cleaning Services International (ARCSI). ISSA welcomes new

co-location partners Cleaning Equipment Trade Association (CETA), which focuses on pressure washer technology and outdoor cleaning, and International Window Cleaning Association (IWCA), which will provide specialty safety training workshops for window cleaners.

A growing number of exhibitors will also be showcasing products and services that go beyond traditional cleaning solutions. This will help attendees find solutions to help with other needs they may have within facilities.

No matter the job title of the attendee, Steinbach says those who attend the show will leave with valuable information.

"Cleaning professionals will take home the answers they've been looking for to solve their greatest needs, whether they be in the form of products, education or peer networking," she says. "Attendees will find niche products they

ISSA/INTERCLEAN

Online Sectio

For more coverage of this year's convention, including seminar schedules, keynote information and Orlando food and fun recommenda-tions, visit **www.cleanlink.**

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can't find anywhere else, as well as talk with supplier executives and technical experts who they may not have access to in their local region."

With professionals from a wide variety of industry sectors in attendance, ISSA/INTERCLEAN will be the perfect venue for networking.

"The entire week is an opportunity to network — with the person next to you in line, at a seminar, a reception, in

a booth and everywhere in between," says Steinbach.

Of the specific events scheduled, members can network at the ISSA Excellence Awards Luncheon or at the reception on Thursday, Nov. 6 from 4 p.m. to 5 p.m., on the show floor at the ISSA Resource Center. Attendees will need to download the invitation from ISSA's LinkedIn group and bring it to receive their free drink ticket.

More than 18,000 people are members of the ISSA LinkedIn group, which makes for an excellent networking opportunity online and then in-person at the annual trade shows. To join, visit issa.com/connect.

Another great networking opportunity that is back by popular demand is the ISSA Bistro, a relatively upscale dining option on the show floor. Attendees can reserve tables prior to arrival through

www.issa.com/bistro, or stop by during the week to see if space is still available.

Attendees who want an easy way to find one another on the busy show floor also can use the ISSA Meeting Hub to connect. Available during the three exhibit days, the Hub includes private meeting space on the show floor that is available to reserve for short discussions or for multiple days.

Gain Perspective

Still on the fence on whether to attend this year's show? Steinbach says executives who send their top people to the show will help them gain a more well-rounded understanding of the industry, as well as establish valuable contacts with the right peers, partners and experts.

"The show really holds different value for different people, but the common theme is that what you're looking for in your department, in your individual job, can be found at ISSA/INTER-CLEAN if you look closely enough," says Steinbach. "You get out of it what you put into it. And what you go to the show for may be different than what one of your top staff might get out of it."

The week of ISSA/INTERCLEAN is a can't miss event. It's a great opportunity for new employees to experience the immense size and scope of the cleaning industry. And for returning veterans, it's a nice break from the daily routine and a chance to re-connect with old friends and peers.

"There is something to be said for the lift you get after being with 16,000 people who are committed to protecting public health through cleaning," says Steinbach. "It's a great chance to re-energize so you can hit the office with an even better attitude and stronger commitment to creating success."

NICK BRAGG is a freelance writer based in Milwaukee.

IEHA Annual Convention

IEHA is celebrating its 48th Annual Conference and Convention from Nov. 2 to 7 at the DoubleTree Orlando. This is the 16th year the organization has co-located its annual convention with ISSA/INTERCLEAN. The convention features networking receptions and roundtables, as well as a vendor showcase. It also features more than eight hours of in-house manager-focused educational sessions. IEHA focused education continues during ISSA on the show floor at the Education Theater.

For specifics on the IEHA Annual Convention, visit www.ieha.org. ■



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Healthcare Hand Washing On The Rise

Innovative programs boost hand hygiene compliance rates in hospitals

By Kassandra Kania

DIRECT OBSERVATION, education and creative signage are some of the initiatives hospitals are adopting in their attempts to improve hand washing compliance among staff. Fortunately for many, their efforts are paying off. Environmental services departments are seeing an upswing in hand hygiene compliance rates, as well as a positive attitude from staff members whose hand hygiene habits are under surveillance.

For this article, Facility Cleaning Decisions interviewed five hospitals to determine their methods for monitoring hand washing habits — and to find out what works and what doesn't.

A Watchful Eye

Monitoring or observing staff directly is common practice in many hospitals. On a monthly basis, staff hand washing or sanitizing habits are monitored discreetly and randomly in patient rooms to verify if they are following hand hygiene protocol.

At Belton Regional Medical Center in Belton, Missouri, hand washing compliance rates for July 2014 were at 97 percent. According to Marvin Ellsworth, manager of environmental services, a select group of employees are monitored on a monthly basis, and if someone is non-compliant, personnel take immediate action.

"We approach them directly, explain what we've been doing and what we observe, then outline what they should be doing in terms of hand hygiene," he says.

This information is shared with the infection control practitioner, who then follows up with the department directly.

In addition to approaching staff members at once, environmental services personnel typically follow up with some form of education to review hand washing procedures. At Geisinger Health

System, Danville, Pennsylvania, noncompliant staff members are assigned an online course in hand washing.

"If someone is observed not properly following hand washing protocol when they walk in and out of a patient room, they will be assigned a remedial online course," notes Jack VanReeth, director of environmental services. "That generates an electronic paper trail, and if someone is caught a number of times after having taken the course, it could result in progressive disciplinary action."

Environmental services managers, like VanReeth, do not take hand washing compliance lightly. In addition to undergoing disciplinary action, repeat offenders could face termination. At Blanchard Valley Hospital in Findlay, Ohio, supervisory personnel are required to perform a minimum of 10 hand hygiene observations a month.

"If someone is non-compliant, the first opportunity is to educate one-onone," says Colleen Abrams, infection preventionist. "If they're non-compliant a second time, the manager has to talk to them, and that could lead to disciplinary action. If it happens a third time, they would meet with me, and we would watch a Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) video together."

Although Blanchard Valley Hospital has not had to let anyone go for hand hygiene non-compliance, Abrams says they could.

"Our human resources policy is written in such a way that if they don't follow policy, it could result in termination," she says.

While monitoring staff is typically the domain of supervisors and managers, some hospitals are improving compliance rates by relying on patients to monitor staff — or staff to monitor themselves.

For the second year, Blanchard Valley





Electronic monitoring systems in dispensers can provide more accurate hand washing compliance data, but hospitals often cite the costs as prohibitive.

Despite the hefty price tag, Mercy Health Saint Mary's in Grand Rapids, Michigan, is on the brink of launching an automatic monitoring solution in two of its patient care units. Once in place, the Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) system will affect 64 beds and approximately 100 staff members.

"We are just starting to implement new badges for the staff with RFID tags embedded in them," explains Kent Miller, director of environmental services. "A sensor will read the staff member's badge as they enter the room, and they will have thirty seconds to either use hand sanitizer or hand soap. Each dispenser will have a sensor in it that reads when someone pushes it.

Miller anticipates a drop in hand hygiene compliance rates initially, as some of the kinks are worked out.

For example, if a staff member runs into a room on code, you're not going to expect them to wash their' hands," he says. "If you're observing them visually, you're not going to count that against them, but if it's an automatic system it is going to count that against them."

While Miller admits these discrepancies still need to be worked out, he has seen electronic monitoring systems succeed elsewhere.

"I had a system like that on the oncology floor at a hospital I came from," he says. "It took a while for staff to be positive about it, but then they saw the impact it had. Within three or four months, we saw compliance rates go up."



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Hospital has included a question on its patient satisfaction survey form, asking whether or not the patient's healthcare worker performed hand hygiene.

"Our scores have gone up 10 points in a year and a half, so we are seeing progress there," notes Abrams.

Loie Couch, infection prevention specialist at Barnes-Jewish Hospital in St. Louis, has also seen improvement in hand washing compliance rates in the hospital intensive care unit (ICU).

"The manager at one of our ICUs decided that [hand washing] was a priority and empowered the staff to hold each other accountable," she says. "So if I see you coming out of a room and you've missed a hand hygiene opportunity, it's okay for me to say something. It's about changing the mind-set of the staff."

A Helping Hand

Indeed, changing staff's mind-set can be one of the biggest challenges when implementing hand washing programs. Fortunately, ongoing education and training can help ease the transition, as well as make employees feel more comfortable about having their hand washing habits monitored.

"Initially, there was some apprehension [about hand washing initiatives] because it's one more thing we're watching," says Kent Miller, director of environmental services at Mercy Health Saint Mary's in Grand Rapids, Michigan. "But they understand what it's going to cost our organization in the long run if we don't do proper hand hygiene. And it's for the patient."

Belton Regional Medical Center conducts annual training, which includes a skills lab demonstrating proper hand washing techniques.

"People don't seem to mind being monitored because it's become an expected thing, and everyone understands the importance of hand washing and sanitizing," notes Ellsworth.

In addition to in-person demonstrations, employees must complete online training slides on hand washing and pass a quiz.

According to VanReeth, infection control and nursing leadership at Geisinger Health Systems is very much in favor of hand washing initiatives — although he admits that it can be challenging for managers to ensure that every last team member is motivated and fully compliant.

While educating staff is important for successful hand hygiene programs, some hospitals have found that educating patients can also motivate staff to comply.

"We teach patients that they have the right to ask," says Couch. "And we teach our nurses that it's okay for the patient to say they didn't see you wash your hands. Instead of getting angry and saying you did it, just do it again."

Similarly, Abrams educates staff to

help them avoid responding negatively to patients' hand washing requests.

"A lot of patients either don't see us wash our hands or don't realize we're using hand sanitizer," notes Abrams. "We encourage nurses that take care of patients to start the day with a script. For example, 'Hi, my name's Colleen, and I'm going to be your nurse for the day. Let me wash my hands before we do X.' If a patient asks you to wash your hands, don't argue with them. Just do it again. But you can avoid rewashing your hands if you use the script and tell them what you're doing."

Reading The Signs

Another effective way to promote hand washing compliance is signage. As Ellsworth notes, "It's a good reminder to wash your hands when it's in your face."

Geisinger Health System uses signage in every isolation room that lists all the personal protective equipment required, as well as the importance of hand washing.

"Many nursing units also have graphs on their billboards as a visual reminder to staff of their progress and degree of compliance," says VanReeth.

Catch phrases, such as "foam in, foam out," are common on posters and signs in patients' rooms. And Blanchard Valley Hospital's hand washing slogan — "gellin' in, gellin' out" — is proudly displayed on magnets on the doors of every patient, exam and procedure room.

In addition, signage geared toward patients serves as a reminder for staff, as well. Last year, Blanchard Valley Hospital introduced buttons for nurses to wear on their uniforms with the words "Ask me if I washed my hands," and a picture of hands being washed. And posters on the walls of patient rooms at Barnes-Jewish Hospital encourage patients to ask employees to wash their hands if they didn't see them do so.

While some hospitals offer pay incentives to staff to encourage hand washing, environmental services managers interviewed for this article reject this practice.

"Washing our hands is an expected part of what we do and not something people need to be rewarded for," says Ellsworth.

Barnes-Jewish Hospital tried offering incentives for units with poor hand hygiene compliance.

"We gave immediate feedback, such as a gift card to the cafeteria for people who performed hand hygiene or a red ticket for those that didn't," says Couch. Unfortunately, the program did not have much impact on hand hygiene compliance rates and was abandoned after several months.

Despite some setbacks, hospitals appear to be on the right track. Environmental services managers state that hand

hygiene compliance rates have improved since they first started implementing hand hygiene programs. In 2009, Geisinger Health Systems' hand hygiene compliance rate was 84 percent. For fiscal year 2013 to 2014, all nursing units were either at 99 or 100-percent compliance.

"People in healthcare try to help people — it's just that not everybody has the correct habits," says Abrams. "We need to constantly observe and listen to

service representative.

patients and healthcare workers. For instance, placement of hand gel is important. If it's not convenient they're not going to use it, so we've had to relocate some of our hand sanitizer. Most people will do what they're required to do if we remind them, get them in the habit, and make it convenient for them."

KASSANDRA KANIA is a freelance writer based in Charlotte, North Carolina.



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Combining Carpet Care And Efficiencies

Equipment that streamlines frequencies and simplifies cleaning processes

By Becky Mollenkamp

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THE BIGGEST BUZZWORD in the cleaning industry for many years has been efficiency. Budget cutbacks have left fewer workers doing more work with fewer resources, and that often means carpets are not being cleaned at the frequencies they should. Facility managers looking for creative solutions are investing in new combination equipment that tackle multiple carpet cleaning tasks.

Traditionally, carpet care is a two-step process (interim and restorative care), each requiring its own machine. New technology, however, is consolidating that process by allowing both agitation and extraction with one piece of equipment.

"The idea of combination machines appeals to the desire to simplify," says Keith Schneringer, director of channel marketing and sustainability for Waxie Sanitary Supply in San Diego.

Interim cleaning is a surface treatment with a focus on quick dry times. It usually involves laying down a minimal amount of water and chemicals, agitating the carpet fibers and letting the surface dry. A newer form of interim cleaning, encap-

sulation, uses minimal water and a special crystal, which encapsulates soil particles with little to no agitation. The captured dirt can then be removed through routine vacuuming.

Restorative care, on the other hand, is a deeper process of extracting trapped soil from the carpet, typically by saturating the carpet with water and then pulling the water back up with suction.

Frequencies for each type of cleaning depend on the type of carpet, its location, and exposure to foot traffic and outside elements. Interim cleaning is designed to keep up a carpet's appearance between restorative cleanings, but many facilities rely heavily on extraction.

In some cases, limited resources may cause a custodial manager to reduce interim maintenance care between scheduled deep cleanings. In others, there may be room in the budget for only one piece of equipment, which is likely an extractor. In these situations, janitors often "make due" with the tools they have and manually adjust the machine to release less water for interim cleaning. In essence, new combo machines automate this process, allowing users to flip a switch to adjust how much water is laid on the carpet.

"This makes it easier for the operator, which helps

save time," Schneringer says.
"Manufacturers saw that this
as how their product was being
used out in the field, and they
are answering the market need
by creating equipment that can
do interim and deep carpet
extraction more easily."

Automated equipment can be a smart choice for facilities with high turnover rates and inexperienced cleaning staffs.

"Folks may not want their operators to be making choices about interim and restorative care," Schneringer says. "They want to give them the equipment

that is only used one way."

Newer technology

allows workers to

consolidate cleaning

processes by allowing

both agitation and

extraction with one

piece of equipment.

Other combo interim-restorative machines incorporate encapsulation, perfect for facilities that have grown accustomed to using this type of technology for routine cleaning.

"Being able to utilize that technology with these dualpurpose machines is cool," Schneringer says. "Encapsulation does a great job of cleaning and gets a carpet drier, faster."

Another type of combination equipment for carpet care is the orbital machine, which can clean both carpeted and hard-surface floors. There are several types of orbital machines but, in general, this multipurpose equipment can provide interim carpet care through encapsulation, as well as strip and scrub hard floors such as ceramic, stone, wood and grout.

"As a facility manger, it makes sense because you get more bang for your buck," Schneringer says. "Instead of buying a carpet cleaning machine and a scrubber, I can buy one machine that does both."

There are several benefits to using orbital machines on carpet. It's safe and easy to use, so it requires less training than other equipment. They also clean well, allow carpets to dry quickly and are fairly portable. The biggest downside to orbital machines is they do not extract. While they work well on regular particles, they are not an option for areas that have heavy soil.

"You may use an orbital machine 95 percent of the time, but you need a hotwater extractor for certain challenges, like when the toilet overflows or a colostomy bag breaks," says Craig Jasper, an approved instructor in commercial carpet maintenance by the Institute of Inspection, Cleaning and Restoration Certification (IICRC).

Weighing The Options

Combination equipment may give you two machines in one, but not necessarily for the price of one. Depending on the type and features, dual-purpose machines can cost \$500 to several thousand more than their traditional counterparts.

"The question is, which makes the most sense for you?" says Jasper.

Before deciding to spend thousands of dollars on a single piece of equipment, managers need to weigh the pros and cons. A distributor can help determine the best machine for the needs of a particular facility based on budget, type of carpet, size of the building, expected cleaning outcomes, soil and traffic patterns, and more.

Dual-purpose equipment is finding buyers for several reasons. First, combining multiple functions into one machine frees up storage space. Second, adding more interim care to a maintenance schedule can significantly extend the life of a carpet, which saves money on replacement costs and downtime during installation.

"The more you put water on carpet and let it sit, the more the fibers and glue break down," says Kevin Thompson, sales manager at Brookmeade Hardware and Supply in Nashville, Tennessee. "These machines can save their carpet and they can get a year or more out of it."

Most importantly, combo equipment can have a positive effect on labor dollars, which is the biggest expense for any cleaning department. A dual-purpose machine can help facilities increase interim cleaning frequency, which is less labor intensive than restorative care. Also, many new machines are faster than older models and may clean twice as much square footage in the same amount of time.

"They are usually more expensive,

but it's one of those things that if it is the right formula for that particular facility, then usually you can take a look at the return on investment and it pencils out," Schneringer says.

There are trade-offs with any product, of course, and these machines are not without their downsides.

"In some cases, this combination equipment can be a blessing," Jasper says. "In other cases, it can be troublesome for departments."

In addition to a higher price tag, some combo machines are quite large. Facilities with elevators, narrow hallways, or many small offices may find the equipment simply isn't mobile enough for their needs. When it comes to orbital machines, facilities can no longer have one worker cleaning carpets while another tackles hard-surface floors, unless they purchase two of the machines.

It's also important with this new technology to invest in training. Users can cause expensive damages by using the wrong chemicals, laying too much water, or even pressing the wrong buttons on the machine.

"One of the mistakes that happens is the facility manager sticks the janitor with the job and doesn't train him properly," Jasper says. "If there was more training, they could do a tremendously good job."

This training is readily available from any good distributor, and the IICRC also offers classes worldwide. The independent organization isn't affiliated with any manufacturer, so it doesn't endorse particular equipment or chemicals. Instead, the instructors review the various types of carpet, discuss how each responds to different methods and chemicals, and explain the advantages and disadvantages of different cleaning methods to help facility managers choose the best chemicals and equipment for their individual situations.

"I stress education when choosing equipment," Jasper says. "When a facility manager is well trained, he can make a smart decision about what is best for his particular facility."

In the end, selecting carpet equipment is no easy task. While everyone hopes for a magic bullet that can do everything and do it all well, that simply doesn't yet exist.

"Everyone would like to tell you their machine is the best for all situations, but the reality is, it's not true," Jasper says. "Every machine is very good and designed to clean, but they all have their pluses and minuses. You have to look at your particular facility to determine what is best. In some cases it might be a combination machine to save space, time and money. But in other situations, it may be a combination of a few pieces of equipment."

BECKY MOLLENKAMP is a freelance writer based in St. Louis, Missouri.



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Betco Corp. — ViBright Thickened Disinfectant Bowl Cleaner contains detergents and quaternary disinfectant compounds that remove rust, water minerals and bacteria. The thickened, 9 percent hydrochloric acid toilet bowl cleaner clings to vertical surfaces, providing more contact time for better cleaning and disinfecting. FREE INFO: Circle 306

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Floor Machine Purchase Improves Worker Safety

Square Scrub — To prepare for the upcoming school season, Kim Spence, Lead Custodian at Barfield Elementary School in Tennessee, requested that the school purchase a Square Scrub Floor Preparation machine.

"I had been talking to Wayne Huggins at Todd Janitorial and he was just raving about them," said Kim.

The primary reason for her decision: Safety.

"We used regular stripper and wax before we got it," she said. "You had to be so careful for safety's sake. Now that we have the Square Scrub, it saves us time, which allows us to be so much more thorough."

It's not just Kim that feels safe using the Square Scrub equipment. She says now that they are using the dry preparation method with the Square Scrub, "Everyone is willing to lend a hand to help because they are no longer afraid to fall and get hurt." To read Kim's complete story, visit www.cleanlink.com/17464news/.

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tion is to educate students, train specialists, study wildlife, rescue stranded animals and explore the world's oceans. Mystic Aquarium in Mystic, Connecticut, a division of Sea Research Foundation, is a family destination that seeks to steward oceans and aquatic creatures and, through outreach, teach people about the fragile ecosystem around them. Nearly 750,000 guests visit the award-winning aquarium annually to see more than 300 species and an extensive collection of marine mammals, including New England's only beluga whales.

As the director of facilities, Ken Backofen is tasked with helping make sure that the guests' first impression is a good one. The job is no easy task thanks to every pigeon, sparrow and seagull that have made the aquarium front entrance area their home. Because where there are birds, there is guano.

In the past, prepping for the days' visitors meant hosing down the front entrance area. That was until the Connecticut Department of Energy & Environmental Protection expressed its disapproval. They said rainwater could go down the storm drains, but water used for cleaning the area could not.

Backofen had to come up with an alternative to clean the aquarium entrance. To reclaim as much water as possible during the cleaning process, he purchased a rideon scrubber, and found it did that and more. The machine also contributed to the green goals of the organization.

"Going green is very important to our organization and goes very well with our mission, which is 'to inspire people to care for and protect our ocean planet through education, research and exploration," he says.

Working with and around animals, small children and other guests, the aquarium staff uses various green products and is a strong proponent for recycling.

"We reclaim anything we can," says Backofen. That includes water.

Help From Equipment

The ride-on scrubber model Backofen purchased last year requires no cleaning chemicals, which, he says, saves the department time and money. Instead, the technology uses oxygen and a small electric current to turn tap water into an effective cleaning solution capable of removing dirt and soil from hard floor surfaces.

According to the equipment manufacturer, the water is infused with oxy-

gen to create highly oxygenated water. A small charge is applied to the water via an electrolysis cell, creating a blended stream of positively and negatively charged oxygenated water capable of attacking soil.

Mechanical agitation provided by the scrubber then removes the soil and water from the surface. After 45 sec-

onds, the charged water has recombined, leaving water and soil in the scrubber tank. With the water in the tank, it's not going down a storm drain and out into aquatic streams.

Another environmental and economic benefit for the facility is that the ride-on scrubber uses less water than previous cleaning methods.

The scrubber has a 50-gallon tank. In contrast, Backofen says a typical garden hose pumps out at least 7 gallons of water

per minute. With the staff previously hosing off the area for 60 to 90 minutes, he estimates the water savings could be 370 gallons or more.

"The staff really enjoys using this piece

of equipment," he says. "It's very easy to use and makes cleaning fun. They're not getting as dirty and the work is not as physical."

Previously, cleaning the outdoor space at the aquarium involved retrieving a garden house and hosing down the entrance, then going over the concrete with a squeegee or brush. Now with a squee-

gee on the back of the machine reclaiming much of the water, the surface is dry within minutes, he says.

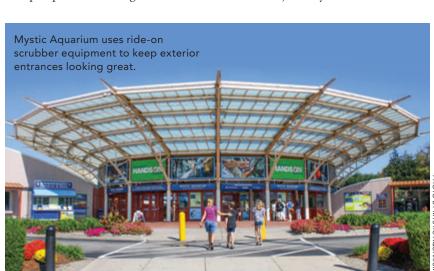
In addition to the squeegee, the machine is also outfitted with carbide-tipped brushes. When used on unfinished concrete, the brushes can wear down, requiring frequent replacement, but Backofen says it's worth it.

"The more you keep going over a surface, the deeper the brush tip gets inside the crevices," he says.



By Rebecca Kanable

Ken Backofen



Overall, Backofen estimates the task of cleaning the area now takes about a third of the time it did previously.

Points For Productivity

In total, Backofen and his staff of 13 housekeepers and three groundskeepers are responsible for 125,220 square feet of building and exhibit space. It is a lot of space, considering the amount of foot traffic they see during normal business hours and night functions after hours.

To clean the indoor floor space, which is mostly carpet, they use vacuums, extractors and shampooers, which are all walk-behinds. The scrubber, which is used only outdoors, is their only ride-on equipment.

"We strive to do all of our cleaning with the equipment before hours. But [the ride-on scrubber] is so safe and quiet, that if we did decide to use it around customers, we could. Plus, the kids love it," says Backofen, noting children love watching the staff at work.

All in all, Backofen says the ride-on scrubber has made a tremendous difference and has cleaned off years of dirt with its abrasive brushes.

It's also very versatile. In addition to cleaning, the ride-on scrubber features a hose attachment that can be used to assist with watering plants and gardens surrounding the facility.

To other departments trying to better their floor care program and/or those considering equipment that functions without chemicals, he suggested: "All you have to do is put aside some time and let the salesman demonstrate it for you. Maybe it is not the right piece of equipment for you but what do you have to lose?"

At Mystic Aquarium, Backofen only gained. Not only does the use of this equipment keep entrances clean and looking great, but the department now complies with requests from state environmental agencies and workers have increased productivity.

"It is the green aspect that we really feel strongly about in helping save our ocean planet," says Backofen. "I didn't realize all the additional benefits that would come with the ride-on scrubber."

REBECCA KANABLE is a freelance writer based in East Troy, Wisconsin.

MANAGEMENT Focusing On Customer Satisfaction

Understanding your "internal customer" and developing a program to satisfy their needs





I WAS HAVING A CONVERSATION with a custodial services manager for a large organization. He happened to mention that he was glad he was no longer a building service contractor, and was able to have an in-house staff. I asked why he was so happy and he answered, "Because I don't have to interact or deal with demanding and unreasonable customers."

I have known this person for several years and I have to say, I was a bit taken aback. Anytime we provide a service, we have a customer. For facility executives, it is an internal customer. This includes anyone within an organization who at any time is dependent on the services the department provides. They are the employees, staff or patrons within your facility.

It's important that managers outline how these customers should be treated and develop a program that results in a satisfied internal customer.

The Foundation

You are responsible for communicating the services your department provides, which starts with a baseline of what building occupants can expect from your team. This includes the scope of work, how requests and complaints will be handled, and the frequency of which service will be provided.

Laying this foundation is vital in the development of a program that results in a satisfied customer. If they have unrealistic expectations, explain your workflow, priorities, processes and timelines. Then, reinforce your goal to provide top-notch service.

There are four key components to keeping building occupants satisfied.

1. Communication

A strong communicator is also a great listener. Listen to the reasons why building occupants are not satisfied with your service. Listen to your staff regarding items that may be preventing them from performing their job at an acceptable level.

Communication can be written, verbal or electronic. But no matter how it is communicated, custodial

Look for more management articles from Ron Segura throughout the year at www.CleanLink.com/FCD.

managers must make sure the process goes full-circle. Listen to the customer/employee concern, respond and fix the problem, then follow up with that individual.

This process solidifies customer confidence in your service. When you receive an email that requires additional work or research, let the person know that you received it and you will work on it.

2. Make Them Flag Wavers

In every organization, there is a person or two that are known to complain. With these individuals, we can either deal with them or make them a flag waver for our department. I always chose the latter.

How is it possible to make a chronic complainer into a supporter of our department? Let me relate an example of what I mean.

My office at Disney was on the Studio in Burbank. I oversaw several buildings, including a couple that were off lot, of which I wasn't able to visit as often as I'd like. In one building, there was a woman that sat on the fourth floor of a six-story facility. Amazingly, this woman knew about every trash can and dispenser that was missed by the custodial crew the night before. After a week of hearing her complaints every day, I arranged to meet her at her building.

In our meeting, I thanked her for the excellent observations and for her taking the time each day to inform me of all our deficiencies. Without her observations, it would be impossible for the department to correct itself and satisfy the building occupants.

So I asked a favor of her. I asked if I could call her on a regular basis or come by periodically to check in. A smile appeared and she said I could contact

I also asked if I could use her as an internal resource if I ever encountered a building occupant that felt our work was lacking. She agreed, and she did become our biggest flag waver.

3. Be Responsible

An internal provider of service is responsible for setting clear guidelines about what building occupants can reasonably expect. The internal customer also must communicate expectations regarding the scope of work.

One of the biggest elements of a customer dissat-

isfied with the quality of work is the scope of work. Often, policies written several years ago are still being performed, but are no longer applicable because of building remodels or changes in cleaning initiatives.

The bottom line is, we could follow the current scope of work exactly as written and still not provide a quality that will satisfy the customer. Managers need to identify those segments of the scope that need to be redesigned and then discussed with the internal customer.

4. Customer Responsibilities

In order to provide the best customer service, custodial managers need the cooperation of building occupants. Managers should sit down with key building occupants to explain service capabilities and limitations. With concerns to quality, openly discuss ideas to improve services.

For example, when special requests arise, it is important to have enough lead time and provide information that allows the department enough time to complete the task to the satisfaction of the customer.

Managers who find they are constantly working on customer 'emergencies' must clarify to occupants the strain this causes the department. A successful outcome depends on the mutual respect and consideration of all team members towards each other.

A clear communication between internal customers and custodial executives is essential. Managers should strive to provide the same quality of service inhouse that the organization provides for the external customer. FCD

RON SEGURA, founder and president of Segura & Associates, has over 45 years of experience in all segments of the cleaning industry. Ten of those years were spent overseeing the cleaning of over 4.5 million square feet for The Walt Disney Company, as well as the management of the Document Services department. With eleven years of consulting both domestic and internationally, Segura & Associates has been assisting organizations to perform at maximum efficiencies. Ron has assisted hundreds of organizations in the reengineering of their operations so that they are able to provide a high quality of service and still meet budgetary requirements.

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