

HOST System Cuts Carpet Cleaning Costs by 63% at Saunders House Nursing Home

A switch to a dry extraction cleaning system has slashed carpet cleaning costs by 63% (\$29,000 per year) at Saunders House, a leading nursing home facility located in Wynnewood, Pennsylvania, a suburb of Philadelphia.

Darren Cornish, Director of Environmental Resources, decided to make the switch after consulting

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The Saunders House nursing home complex, Wynnewood, Pennsylvania. 75,000 square feet of carpet is maintained with the HOST Dry Extraction Carpet Cleaning System.

with officials from Racine Industries, Inc., manufacturer of HOST® Dry Extraction Carpet Cleaning System, and a nearby HOST distributor.

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HOST representatives first called on Saunders House several years ago. The nursing home was a daunting challenge. The facility had 75,000 square feet of carpet, with a variety of fibers from olefin to nylon.

Demonstrating in the Alzheimer's Unit

The HOST representatives asked to demonstrate their system on the toughest area in the building, the fourth floor Alzheimer's unit. The carpet is a tufted olefin, direct glued to the floor. Because of the problems with human waste and spills from medication and food, the carpeting was cleaned each day with hot water extraction.

Despite this rigorous cleaning schedule, the carpet was heavily spotted. The frequent wet cleaning was causing mold problems along the edges of the room and on the base of the walls. There was a strong smell of chemicals from the cleaners, and also from deodorizers and other material being used to stop the growth of mold.

As is commonly done in demonstrations of this type, the HOST representatives marked off a 5' x 5' area with tape and cleaned it twice. They then removed the tape to show a dramatically clean square in the midst of the dirty carpet.

How the HOST Dry Extraction Carpet Cleaning System Works

The HOST System is a low moisture cleaning process. First, HOST Dry Carpet Cleaner, a moist sponge-like cleaner, is applied to the carpet. Next, a uniquely designed HOST Machine with counter-rotating brushes is used to work the HOST Cleaner into the carpet to deep clean it and revive the carpet pile.

Since the HOST system uses little moisture, the cleaned area can be used right away. There is no downtime. The work is quick

and quiet. Spotted areas can be cleaned without disruption. The cleaned area is easily blended into the surrounding clean carpet.

HOST Cleaning Improves Indoor Air Quality

The HOST System of applying HOST Dry Carpet Cleaner to the carpet, brushing it through the carpet and then vacuuming up the HOST Dry Carpet Cleaner removes dirt and reduces allergens. Research studies have shown that one cleaning with the HOST System using HOST Machines reduces:

- Dust mites by 78%
- Dust Mite allergen by 75%
- Cat Allergen by 85%
- Mold Spores by 85%

The Cost Analysis

After the successful demonstration, another meeting was scheduled to evaluate the results and run a cost analysis.

A proprietary computer program performs a Carpet Maintenance Cost Analysis which compares labor and material costs for all wet carpet cleaning and spot removal activities and shows how much could be saved by switching to the HOST System.

HOST Regional Manager, Arthur Dominguez, recommended an aggressive cleaning program. His proposal included a 70% cleaning per month, a heavier setting on the HOST Applicator (which automatically applies the correct amount of HOST Cleaner to reduce waste), and a cleaning pace of 600 square feet per hour.

He further recommended that Saunders House amortize the equipment cost over just three years. Despite this rigorous proposal, cost was only 32 cents per square foot compared to 71 cents for wet cleaning, a projected 55% decrease in cost.

Annual cost savings was estimated at \$25,000.

Dominguez knew this strong program would succeed and concluded his presentation with a challenge. "Even if I am half wrong," he told them, "you will still save over \$12,000 in the first year!"

That did it. The complete HOST System was purchased along with a CAMP®, Computer Aided Maintenance Plan for carpets. The CAMP plan uses color coded diagrams, based on the facility's blueprints, to show where to vacuum and HOST clean the carpet depending on traffic and usage.

A Commitment to Training

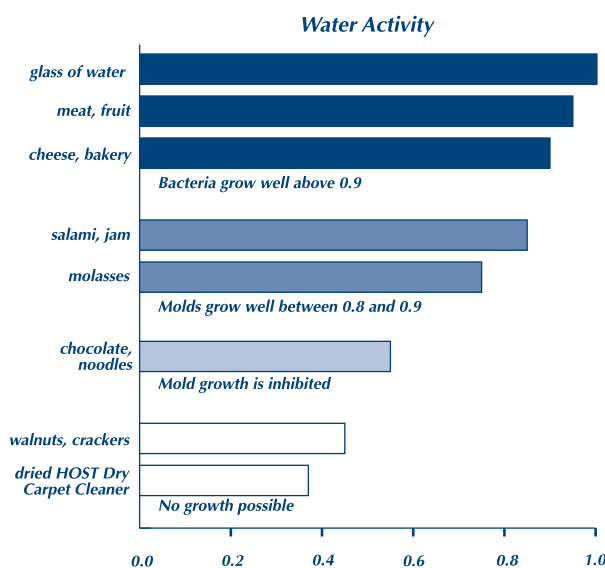
But that really was only the beginning. The HOST staff conducted an intensive in-service program to help the staff best utilize the new process.

Cornish and all of his carpet cleaning personnel were invited to the HOST SCHOOL On The Road in nearby Lancaster, Pennsylvania. (Similar HOST training sessions are held throughout the country.)

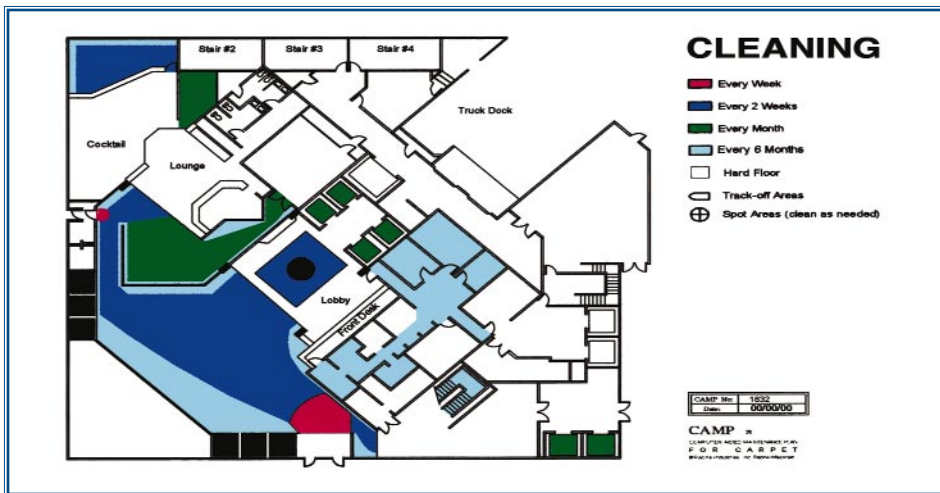
This careful training to make sure the system was used properly, resulted in the cost savings exceeding the estimates. The new total carpet maintenance program, including daily vacuuming, had a cost figure of 26 cents per square foot, well under the 71 cents that Saunders House had been spending and even under the 32 cents that HOST had projected. Total annual savings were \$29,000.

The housekeeping staff was extremely pleased with the results. The mold problem in the Alzheimer's

Water Activity and Microorganism Growth



This chart shows growth of microorganisms at various water activity levels. Remove their available moisture by eliminating leaks, improving humidity control and dry cleaning your carpets for a cleaner, healthier facility.



Saunders House saved nearly \$30,000 the first year they implemented CAMP. CAMP, Computer Aided Maintenance Plan, provides the added benefit of improving the carpet's daily appearance and prolonging its useful life.

unit has been corrected due in part to the HOST cleaning.

Cornish also likes the speed of the process, especially with regard to spot removal. "When I used hot water extraction, I had twenty call-outs a day to correct spills. It took eight hours to clean those areas," he said. "Now with HOST, those same call-outs take us two hours!"

"The system was clearly a great success here!" Dominguez said.

A Good Thing Gets Even Better

When Saunders House originally purchased their HOST Machines, they were the original model known as the T6 which brushed the cleaner into the carpet but required a separate upright vacuum to retrieve it. Racine Industries, Inc., the manufacturer, subsequently created a new series of machines with vacuuming capability built right in. The latest model, the HOST Liberator®, is a four-in-one machine that can perform all the required carpet care tasks in a single pass through a building. The machine offers deep power vacuuming, pile lifting, spot removal and area

cleaning, all at the flick of a switch.

Though the local distributor representative wanted Cornish to give the new Liberator a try, he did not do so for another couple of years, since he was happy with the performance of the T6 models the facility was using.

Eventually though, new equipment

was required and several Liberators were purchased. Cornish noticed a further benefit.

"The dry soil removal capability of the Liberator is off the charts!" Cornish said.

"Our carpets show off their texture and have a richer appearance since we began to use the Liberators."

"Since cleaning with HOST and the Liberator is so quick, we can clean around the residents' schedules. We can clean their rooms in minutes while they are out of the room for their activities."

"My staff likes the Liberator because it's very easy to use. I have an extensive training program for all my staff and when a new hire begins, we get them to understand the HOST concept with a mini HOST School that reinforces the departmental training. I also pair new hires with a 'preceptor', someone who knows the ropes and can be a coach for them."



Peter Barnes, Assistant Director of Environmental Resources, has reduced carpet cleaning costs, labor and training time with the HOST System.

All of this time and effort expended against preventive maintenance for carpet has paid off handsomely for Cornish. In seven years, in a facility whose very environment produces carpet cleaning headaches, he has had nothing but compliments on the carpet appearance.

“Even consultants hired to critique the facility have been impressed!” he noted.

Extended Carpet Life

“Though the system was initially implemented to lower labor costs, there have also been significant savings achieved by extending the carpet’s useful life. Carpet typically can be expected to last perhaps five years in this demanding environment.”

“We’ve been able to extend the replacement cycle to almost double that, eight to ten years, saving tens of thousands of dollars in capital outlay, not to mention the disruption that carpet replacement causes residents and staff.”

Still, long term care facilities like Saunders House need to undergo periodic remodeling to keep the facility attractive to new residents. Cornish budgets \$20,000 to \$25,000 per year for this purpose.



“My staff likes the Liberator because it’s very easy to use,” says Darren Cornish, Director of Environmental Resources, as he and Peter Barnes, Assistant Director of Environmental Resources, look on while Sean Golden, Carpet Cleaning Technician, operates the HOST Liberator.

“I would definitely recommend the HOST System and the Liberator to other managers,” said Cornish.

“We now have a seven year track record of success with HOST. We have proof that an aggressive program of carpet maintenance can save you money.”



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