



# ENVIRONMENTAL SPECIFICATION GUIDANCE FOR JANITORIAL SERVICES

The District of Columbia is committed to procuring quality goods and services in a timely manner and reasonable cost that support the District in meeting its sustainability goals. Compliance with specification guidance is sufficient to meet PPRA Section 1101(a) environmentally preferable procurement requirements. To access solicitation documents with full contract language, [click here](#).



## BENEFITS

**\$75 MILLION**

Per year is spent by U.S. institutions to address chemical-related custodial injuries. Using green cleaners can reduce injuries and lower costs.

**68**

Tons of hazardous substances were eliminated by one corporation annually by using microfiber mops and using washable mats at door exteriors.

SOURCE

RPN Responsible  
Purchasing Guide: Cleaners

Use the [Green Cleaning Calculator](#) to estimate the benefits for *your* building from switching to green cleaning!

## Scope

This specification covers janitorial services for all indoor activities required to clean public buildings.

## Specification Language

Janitorial services contractors for the District of Columbia shall meet the environmental criteria and requirements defined below.

### Planning Requirements

1. Develop and maintain Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) that govern cleaning procedures, training, chemical handling, equipment maintenance, and quality assurance as set forth in Green Seal's Environmental Standard for Commercial Cleaning Services (GS-42) Section 2.1.
2. Develop a Building-Specific Green Cleaning Plan that describes how the building will be cleaned effectively while protecting human health and the environment. The plan shall describe the methods, materials, and equipment used under the contract and meet requirements set forth in Green Seal's Environmental Standard for Commercial Cleaning Services (GS-42) Section 2.2.

### Cleaning Products and Supplies

1. Contractors shall follow the requirements set forth in the [Environmental Specification Guidance for Cleaning Supplies](#) when purchasing cleaning supplies and miscellaneous janitorial products covered in the cleaning supplies specification guidance.
2. Cleaning and disinfecting products shall include a Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) and product label with a list of ingredients and instructions for proper handling.
3. Contractors shall order cleaning products in concentrated form, whenever practical. When cleaning products are procured in a concentrated form, service providers shall use a chemical measuring and dilution control system that limits worker exposure to chemical concentrates while facilitating the proper dilution of chemical concentrates. Compliance can be demonstrated by meeting requirement 4.1.3 of [Green Seal's Environmental Standard for Commercial Cleaning Services \(GS-42\)](#).
4. Metal polish (including but not limited to chrome and brass cleaner); furniture polish; graffiti remover; gum remover; and lime and scale remover – all cleaning product types not addressed in the sustainable cleaning products specification - shall either be:



## Specification Language (continued)

- (a) Green Seal certified
- (b) Ecologo certified
- (c) EPA Design for Environment (DfE); or
- (d) Not contain volatile organic compounds (VOCs) in concentrations that exceed the levels required by the California Air Resources Board's (CARB) Regulation for Reducing Emissions from Consumer Products for the specific product category according to the most current version of the CARB regulations in effect at the time of purchase.

### Powered Cleaning Equipment and Maintenance

1. HEPA vacuums shall be equipped with the proper filter or bag; filters shall be changed or cleaned according to the manufacturer's instructions. Compliance can be demonstrated by meeting requirements 2.3 and 4.3 of Green Seal's Environmental Standard for Commercial Cleaning Services (GS-42).

### Entry Way Mats

1. Place washable mats in door exteriors and wash the mats as needed to prevent dirt from entering the building. Compliance can be demonstrated by meeting the requirement 4.4 of Green Seal's Environmental Standard for Commercial Cleaning Services (GS-42).

### Waste, Recycling, and Composting

1. Contractors shall support the District in implementing waste, recycling, and composting programs and shall comply with all laws, regulations, policies, and procedures governing waste, recycling, and composting in the District of Columbia.

### Communications

1. Contractors shall develop a communications strategy with regard to cleaning personnel and facility managers as set forth in Green Seal's Environmental Standard for Commercial Cleaning Services (GS-42) Section 5.0.

### Training

1. Contractors shall train all cleaning staff in the proper handling of chemicals, use of equipment, proper cleaning procedures, and safe and proper disposal of chemicals as set forth in Green Seal's Environmental Standard for Commercial Cleaning Services (GS-42) Section 6.0.

### Reporting

The Contractor shall document that the products and services supplied under this contract comply with key environmental criteria noted above. The contractor shall submit the following information to the designated District point of contact.

1. Cleaning Product List: To be provided upon contract signing and whenever changes are made in excel or word via e-mail, and provide at minimum:
  - a) Product type (degreaser, detergent, etc.)
  - b) Product name
  - c) Applicable eco-label or how product meets stated environmental requirement
2. Material Safety Data Sheets and Product Labels for all cleaning products used - To be provided to facility managers upon contract signing in a binder. Binder is to be updated whenever changes are made.
3. Building Specific Green Cleaning Plan – To be provided twice per year starting within 30 days of signing the contract. The plan shall be provided in Word, Excel or PDF and delivered via email. The plan shall address the Building Specific Green Cleaning Plan requirements outlined in the requirements section of the solicitation.



4. Training Curriculum – To be provided annually from date of contract signing and whenever changes are made. The training curriculum shall be provided in word or pdf via email.
5. Training Records - To be provided annually from date of contract signing in word or pdf via email. Training records submitted shall address training records requirements outlined in the requirements section of the solicitation.
6. Standard Operating Procedures- To be provided upon contract signing and on an annual basis in word or pdf via email. Standard Operating Procedures requirements are outlined in the requirements section of the solicitation.
7. Communications Strategy-To be provided upon 30 days of contract signing, whenever changes are made, and on an annual basis in word or pdf via email. The communication strategy shall address requirements outlined in the requirements section of the solicitation.
8. Environmentally Preferable Products and Services (EPPS) Report – To be provided annually or as requested in Excel and delivered via email. The report shall include:
  - a) Janitorial services contractor name
  - b) Contract no.
  - c) Contract award date
  - d) Company from which cleaning products and supplies were purchased
  - e) Date of purchase
  - f) Product description - manufacturer description of product
  - g) Sku
  - h) Corresponding environmentally preferable product type based on the product types included in the DC Janitorial Services and Cleaning Supplies Environmental Guidance Documents (ex. toilet paper)
  - f) Number of units purchased
  - g) Price per unit
  - h) Total cost
  - i) Compliance with DC environmental criteria – Indicate how product purchased meets DC environmental criteria (ex. Green Seal certification). If the environmental requirement was not specified in the solicitation, indicate NA.
9. Recycling Report – To be provided monthly in excel via email and meet the recycling report requirements outlined in the requirements section of the solicitation.

An EPPS Report template is available to assist Contractors in meeting the District's EPPS reporting requirements on the [Sustainable Purchasing Program web page](#).



## Background Information



**Green Seal** is a non-profit standard-setting organization certifying a range of products and services. Green Seal standards and certification are based on scientific testing and independent audits. Green Seal's

Environmental Standard for Commercial Cleaning Services (GS-42) ensures that cleaners use practices and products that protect the health of building occupants, custodians, and the environment. The GS-42 standard has requirements in six categories: planning; products, supplies, and equipment; cleaning procedures; communication; training; and labeling. The full text of the standard, certification checklist, and list of certified service providers can be found on the Green Seal website.

Many of the requirements in this specification are requirements from Green Seal's Environmental Standard for Commercial Cleaning Services (GS-42). GS-42 certification provides an easy way to identify environmentally preferable janitorial service providers along with added 3rd party assurance that requirements are being met. District purchasers are encouraged to consider including GS-42 certification as a requirement in the solicitation or to incorporate additional requirements from the GS-42 standard into solicitations.

### Environmental Hotspots The most important environmental benefits associated with this specification

**WATER CONSUMPTION** This specification requires that cleaning products meet the criteria in the Cleaning Supplies specification, which requires using microfiber mops, cloths, and sponges instead of cotton. Microfiber uses less liquid than cotton, which reduces water and chemical use.

**RECYCLED CONTENT** The Cleaning Supplies specification requires postconsumer recycled content janitorial paper products, which reduces demand for virgin wood.

**POLLUTANTS/TOXICITY/  
HEAVY METALS** The training and practices required in this specification protect the health and safety of building occupants and custodians by reducing exposure to harmful ingredients. In addition, the Cleaning Supplies specification requires HEPA vacuums, which use filters that trap dust and other irritants, improving indoor air quality. The Cleaning Supplies specification also prohibits or restricts certain toxic chemicals that can have adverse impacts on human health.

**PACKAGING** The eco-labels in the Cleaning Supplies specification require less material-intensive packaging methods and/or recycled content for packaging of their certified products.

**END-OF-LIFE DISPOSAL** The eco-labels in the Cleaning Supplies specification require distributors to offer training or information on proper disposal methods.



## Significance to the District

**SUSTAINABLE DC PLAN** Recycling and composting requirements support meeting Sustainable DC Plan Waste Goal 1: By 2032, send zero waste to landfills per year and reduce total waste generation by 15%.

**LEGISLATION** Sustainable Solid Waste Management Amendment Act of 2014 requires solid waste to be separated at the point of discard into recyclables, compostables, and trash and states that the District shall follow the solid waste management hierarchy to the maximum extent practical. Healthy Schools Act of 2010, Section 501 requires the use of environmentally friendly cleaning supplies in public schools.

**LEED FOR EXISTING BUILDINGS: O&M** LEED v4 specifies GS-42 to meet the “Green Cleaning Policy” prerequisite. The following optional credits in LEED 2009 are encompassed in the GS-42 standard: IEQ3.1 – High Performance Cleaning Program; IEQ3.2 – Custodial Effectiveness Assessment; IEQ3.3 – Purchasing of Sustainable Cleaning Products and Materials; IEQ3.4 – Sustainable Cleaning Equipment; and IEQ3.5 – Indoor Chemical and Pollutant Source Control. **Option 2** might qualify for LEED credits depending on the specific processes and practices of the service provider.

*For more information about sustainable specification guidance or the District’s Sustainable Purchasing Program, please visit: <http://ocp.dc.gov/page/sustainable-purchasing>, call the OCP Customer Contact Center at: [202.724.4477](tel:202.724.4477), or email [sppdc@dc.gov](mailto:sppdc@dc.gov)*