



# BEST PRACTICES GUIDE

Insights & Best Practices for **Education Facility Cleaning**

## WHY FOCUS ON CLEANING?

In your day-to-day work, it's easy to lose track of the reason school and university cleaning programs matter so much. Students and faculty rely on the facilities you maintain to provide an atmosphere where they can learn and teach without distraction, and that promotes good health and good focus for learning. Put simply, your maintenance program facilitates education.

## CLEANING WITH FEWER CHEMICALS

Practicing sustainable everyday cleaning is an increasingly important goal for your schools and a vital aspect of your job. In addition to using fewer chemicals, generating less waste and using less water and energy, cleaning more sustainably can reduce costs, improve indoor air quality and enhance safety.

### 1. SCRUB FLOORS WITH FEWER CHEMICALS

Floor scrubbing without added detergents leverages an innovative technology that electrically converts water into an effective cleaning solution that improves floor traction and safety, and reduces environmental impact. And it can save you money by reducing the cost of training, purchasing, storing and handling of chemicals—while also using up to 70% less water than conventional methods.

### 2. REMOVE FINISH SAFELY WITHOUT CHEMICAL

Orbital scrubbing machines easily reach into corners and hard-to-reach

areas for efficient floor finish removal without chemical floor strippers.

By changing the pads, you can use the same machine for daily floor maintenance, allowing you to use one machine for a variety of tasks.

**ONE OUT OF THREE**  
cleaning products  
contains ingredients known to cause human health or environmental problems

Government Procurement News Contributor

**NEARLY 1 IN 13** CHILDREN OF SCHOOL AGE HAS **ASTHMA**  
making it the leading cause of school absenteeism due to chronic illness

<https://www.epa.gov/iaq-schools/why-indoor-air-quality-important-schools>

## IMPROVING INDOOR AIR QUALITY

Many students have heightened susceptibility to infections, respiratory problems and other health issues associated with air contaminants and over 50% of schools have indoor air quality problems, which children attending have no control over, but are still subjected to.<sup>1</sup> By improving indoor air quality through better cleaning equipment and practices, you can enhance the health of your students and staff.

### 1. USE HEPA FILTRATION TO REDUCE AIR CONTAMINANTS

High efficiency particulate air (HEPA) filters on vacuums help control the levels of airborne particles—including those associated with allergens. Lower-quality filters don't capture the smallest of these particles, so vacuuming can stir them up and degrade air quality.

### 2. DRY CARPETS FASTER AND REDUCE MOLD POTENTIAL

Advances in microfiber technology used in carpet cleaning result in rapid drying that cleans while leaving up to 90% less water in the carpet compared to deep extraction, allowing carpets to dry in just minutes. This allows you to reduce the potential for mold and odors.

### 3. MINIMIZE CLEANING CHEMICAL SMELLS

Detergent-free floor scrubbing reduces floor cleaning chemical smells and helps create a safer environment for students, staff and visitors—especially with today's growing population of asthmatics.

## SAFER FLOORS & FEWER SLIPS

Students, staff and visitors expect facilities to be clean and safe, and ensuring their safety is among your most important responsibilities. Reducing cleaning-related hazards—including slippery floors, poor indoor air quality, and the handling and mixing of chemicals—will help you minimize accidents and meet your safety goals.

### 1. USE HIGH-TRACTION FLOOR COATINGS

Using floor coatings and cleaning products that are certified by the National Floor Safety Institute (NFSI) as “high traction” can reduce the risk of slip-and-fall accidents. For the safest floors possible, combine NFSI-certified chemical-free scrubbing technology with NFSI-certified coatings. These coatings also make floors easier to clean by increasing durability and chemical resistance, and decreasing dust, dirt and liquid buildup.

### 2. TRY DETERGENT-FREE FLOOR SCRUBBING AND FINISH REMOVAL

Improperly diluted chemicals used in floor scrubbing machines can leave a slippery residue, increasing the risk of slip-and-fall accidents. Explore detergent-free technologies that leave no residue and actually remove built-up chemical residue.

And, look for chemical-free orbital scrubbing floor finish removal that minimizes airborne chemicals and reduces the risk of chemical-splash accidents.

**“THE ABILITY TO LEAVE THE FLOORS RELATIVELY DRY IS IMPORTANT.”**

**Gene Woodard**  
University of Washington

**“THE REASON WE’RE TRYING TO GO AWAY FROM CHEMICAL STRIPPING AND TRY THE ORBITAL TECHNOLOGY, IS...PROBABLY ONE OF THE BIGGEST HEALTH ISSUES I HAVE HAS TO DO WITH STRIPPING FLOORS.”**

**Bob Hanson**  
Edmonds School District

## IMPROVING SATISFACTION

Student and parent perceptions can differ greatly from staff perception, so it’s helpful to think like a student or parent and navigate your facility with a critical eye—starting with walking through the front door. A clean, distraction-free environment can help lead to an improved learning environment.

### 1. USE QUALITY FLOOR SCRUBBERS TO MAKE A GREAT IMPRESSION

People often look down as they walk through hallways, so the floor has a huge impact on perceptions of cleanliness. Plus, excessive cleaning noise can negatively impact the learning environment for students. But today’s floor scrubbers are quieter and may even feature detergent-free cleaning, so floors can be cleaned day or night without excessive noise or chemical smells that can affect the learning experience.

### 2. IMPROVE YOUR CARPET’S APPEARANCE AND REDUCE ODORS

Look for the new, rapid-drying carpet cleaning system featuring microfiber technology that uses less water and leaves up to 90 percent less water in the carpet, compared to deep extraction. Faster drying means quicker turnaround times and allows for more frequent interim carpet cleaning that can improve your facility’s appearance and reduce odors.



[cleancountry.com](http://cleancountry.com)

## PROTECT YOUR SCHOOL'S IMAGE

Education facilities have always needed to be clean in order to fulfill their missions. But today, your facility also needs to be perceived as clean by students, parents and visitors. This makes it tough to find the right balance between not being seen enough while cleaning, and being seen too much. Innovative solutions are available to help improve the cleanliness of your facilities, and help them look and feel clean as well.

### 1. SWEEP OUTDOOR SURFACES FOR IMMEDIATE IMPACT

Students, parents and other visitors notice sand, litter and other debris present on your facility's sidewalk or parking ramp. Using sweepers to clean these exterior surfaces improves perceptions of cleanliness, and helps reduce the amount of dirt tracked into your facilities.

### 2. USE INNOVATIVE FLOOR SCRUBBERS TO CLEAN MORE FREQUENTLY

Choose high-performance walk-behind scrubbers that allow congested spaces, including classrooms, to be cleaned more frequently. They also clean much better than traditional mops and dirty buckets, and help you project a high-tech image.

### 3. CLEAN AND DRY CARPETS QUICKLY — EVEN IN FRONT OF VISITORS

Rapid-drying carpet cleaning equipment with microfiber technology enables more frequent interim carpet cleaning with minimal disruption. These quieter machines dry carpets in 30 minutes or less, and allow cleaning to be performed while students are present—making the perception of a clean facility a reality.

**“I THINK THAT WE WOULD BE KIDDING OURSELVES IF WE DIDN'T THINK THAT FIRST IMPRESSIONS MEAN EVERYTHING. IT'S A BIG DEAL FOR US. WE WANT THE RIGHT EQUIPMENT TO GIVE THAT FIRST IMPRESSION.”**

**Jeff Edgerly**

University of Notre Dame



## CONCLUSION

Protecting the health and safety of your students and staff is one of the most important jobs you have as a cleaning professional. In addition, a clean school helps ensure a positive and non-disruptive learning experience helps students do better in school and reduces health issues that may be caused by dust, dirt and other allergens in the school.

To get customized cleaning solutions for your school, call 800.964.9644 to schedule a personalized site visit with a Tennant representative.

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