



## Superintendent's Circular

NUMBER:  
FMT-11  
Version 01

### GREEN CLEANERS' POLICY

*This Circular will remain in effect unless rescinded or superseded by a subsequent version.*

#### BACKGROUND

High-performance schools that have superior indoor air quality and are healthy and well maintained have been shown to reduce absenteeism and improve student performance. Many Boston school children suffer from allergies and asthma, which can be triggered by poor air quality and chemical, biological, and particulate contaminants. Long or short-term exposure to toxic chemicals or harmful particles, gasses, or vapors can have serious consequences, especially for children, such as asthma, allergies, depression, hormonal changes, or even cancer. To ensure the best quality learning environment for our students and working environment for our staff, it is the responsibility of the Boston Public Schools (BPS) to minimize the negative impacts that cleaning products have on occupant health and the environment.

#### POLICY

The BPS is committed to providing and maintaining high-performing buildings and grounds in an environmentally friendly and sustainable manner. The Green Cleaners Policy is in accordance with the City of Boston's executive order relative to

greening city building maintenance and operations and executive order relative to climate action. This policy applies to all BPS buildings and grounds, including offices, classrooms, restrooms, cafeterias, gymnasiums, hallways, pathways, kitchenettes, stairwells, etc.

Under this green cleaning policy, BPS departments, school sites, and partner programs taking place in schools must comply with the following:

- Purchase, provide, and use only environmentally friendly cleaning products that comply with the Green Seal Environmental Standard (GS-37), including but not limited to glass, bathroom, carpet, and general-purpose cleaners used for industrial and institutional purposes.
- All other non-approved cleaning products are prohibited from being used in BPS buildings and grounds by any staff, volunteer, vendor, or partner.
- Use of disinfectants for cleaning shall be limited to food service areas and the clean-up of biological and bodily wastes and “high touch areas” (when directed). All disinfectants must be premixed, registered by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and have a Hazardous Materials Identification System (HMIS) rating of 2 or less.
- Pre-approved or least toxic and asthma friendly sanitizer/disinfectants must be used in early learning centers in accordance with the National Association of Education for Young Children accreditation standards.

## IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

BPS Facilities Management and custodial staff will maintain this policy through these implementation steps:

- Ensure vendors can provide proof that their products meet the criteria for Green Seal Environmental Standard for Cleaning Products for Industrial and Institutional Use, GS-37. The Green Seal program is a North American multi-attribute, lifecycle environmental standard and certification.
- Burnish floor surfaces where applicable to reduce the use of potentially irritating cleaning and stripping compounds. Any necessary floor stripping and waxing will be performed during non-occupied hours.
- Automatic mixing stations will be installed for custodial use that dispense pre-mixed products to ensure the active ingredient concentration required by the EPA, limit employee contact with chemicals for enhanced safety, and minimize waste.
- Upon request, school custodians will provide teachers and other BPS staff with OSHA-compliant pre-labeled spray bottles of mixed green cleaning compounds (desktop and glass cleaners) that meet the Green Cleaning Policy standards.
- Train and update BPS custodial staff and others who use chemicals on the Green Cleaners Policy, including but not limited to hazard communications (Right to Know law, MSDS, etc.), worker safety and personal protective equipment use, safe and proper product and equipment use, etc.

- Custodians will participate on the school's Wellness Council to ensure compliance with this policy as well as other Healthy School Environment policies and initiatives (recycling, integrated pest management, etc.).
- To the greatest extent possible, cleaning materials and associated packaging will be reused and/or recycled to minimize waste.
- Protocols governing safe handling and storage of cleaning chemicals shall be adopted. Quality control checks will be used to ensure adoption.

## **RESPONSIBLE PARTIES**

This policy is overseen by the BPS Facilities Management Department and is updated annually to help ensure cleaning practices, products, and technologies specified in this policy meet industry standards and best practices.

BPS staff, contractors, and vendors shall review this policy and may request additional information and training as required.

**For more information about this circular, contact:**

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