

News & Events

Environmentally Friendly
Hard Floor Maintenance -
The Impact of Green

by Stanley Q. Hulin

Page 1 - 3

The 2012 Americhem
Seminar Series

February Equipment Rodeo
& Open House

Pages 4 - 5

March Disinfection &
Decontamination Program

Page 6

Environmentally Friendly Hard Floor Maintenance - The Impact of Green

By Stanley Q. Hulin

It seems that “green” has arrived and there is not much chance of putting the genie back in the bottle. It is no longer some radical new idea or utopian event that is in the distant future, it is here and you better believe that it will impact your business. The question now becomes, what are you going to do about it?

The term “Green” comes from the US Green Building Council (USGBC) a nonprofit organization that certifies sustainable buildings and neighborhoods. The USGBC created the LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Green Building Rating System™, to provide sustainable standards for several types of buildings. The six prime target areas are sustainable site development, water savings, energy efficiency, materials and resources selection, indoor environmental quality and innovation and design process. To achieve LEED certification, buildings must earn points in one of the many LEED Rating Systems categories validated through a third party certifier.

“Green” is more than just safe cleaning chemicals, although chemicals have a great deal to do with the green movement. “Green” is an attitude; it is a commitment to the environment and a dedication to leaving less of a carbon footprint on the planet. There are several factors that come into play when it comes to balancing the challenges of becoming “green” and the craft of hard floor maintenance.

(continued on page 2)



The Americhem 2012 Equipment Rodeo

Thursday, February 23rd -
Americhem’s Equipment Rodeo!

SAVE money! Learn about the
Leading Edge of floor care and
carpet care equipment! Operate
them, Ride them, Race them!

Meet the factory representatives,
meet with Americhem equipment
specialists! Get all your question
answered! Leasing companies will
be onsite!

Don’t Miss This Event!



Environmentally Friendly Hard Floor Maintenance (continued from page 1)

Floor maintenance constitutes a significant amount of time dedicated to the life of the floor covering. From the time it is installed, until the time it is removed, the floor covering is subjected to various levels of floor maintenance. The service procedures incorporated in the program range from simple dry procedures to complex restorative projects. At each level there is a combination of chemistry, equipment and best practices that are required for completing the task. The floor maintenance technician should learn some basic “Green” principles to understand the program and help them through this transitional time.

Hard floor maintenance incorporates the use of cleaning chemicals as well as coating chemicals. The primary concern of these chemicals is that of hazardous substances contained in them. Alkylphenol ethoxylates (APEs), corrosive substances and volatile organic compounds (VOCs) top the list of concern.

Alkylphenol ethoxylate surfactants contribute to aquatic toxicity as well as having the potential to enter and attack hormones in the human body, which may cause cancer or result in birth defects.

Corrosive substances are powerfully irritating products, which may cause serious skin or eye damage when exposed to them. Stripping chemicals and degreasers are usually alkaline products that have a high pH value (10 to 14), which can be quite caustic. The use of acidic products that have a low pH value (0 to 6) can produce the same outcome on the other side of the pH scale. Either side of the pH scale can be caustic to the skin, eyes and respiratory system, many technicians can attest to the painfulness of chemical burns.

Volatile organic compounds are air pollutants that consist of organic compounds that evaporate at relatively low temperature and contribute to air pollution. There are many floor maintenance chemicals that actually contain high levels of VOC's.

Additionally, zinc is used in many floor seals and/or finishes, which may be toxic to creatures that live in streams, rivers and lakes should these wastes be deposited in them.

When selecting floor maintenance chemicals for green projects, purchase products that do not contain carcinogens or toxins; ammonia, ammonium hydroxide, ammonium salts, alkylphenol ethoxylates and dibutyl phthalates. Avoid purchasing products that contain glycol ethers. Select seals or finishes that do not contain metals such as zinc. Select products that have lower pH values and fewer VOC's. Of course as with all chemicals, when they need to be disposed of, make sure they are disposed of in a safe and environmentally friendly manner.

How the products are packaged is equally important. Many products today are packaged in post consumer recycled materials and many are made of recyclable materials themselves. More and more companies are making concentrates and super concentrates to reduce the amount of packaging materials needed. Purchasing by bulk can also contribute to less waste, buy pails over gallons when possible and drums over pails if you have resources to move and store them.

Equipment, tools and materials are also under the spotlight. Soil that is stopped at the door has no chance of attacking the floor so matting systems are an integral part of green cleaning and a point can be awarded to those buildings that address entryway systems. The purchase of sustainable cleaning equipment is also a part of the program. Electric, battery and propane-powered equipment have been included in the mix. Dust-capture systems for floor buffers and burnishers are part of the system. Automatic scrubbing machines with variable speed pumps and metered chemical systems that minimize the use of cleaning solutions are preferred. Gel batteries are environmentally preferable to traditional batteries in all battery-powered equipment. Propane equipment must be monitored closely and high-efficiency, low-emission engines with catalytic converters and mufflers are required. Reducing the amount of carbon monoxide discharged into the environment and noise reduction are critical to the success of the system.

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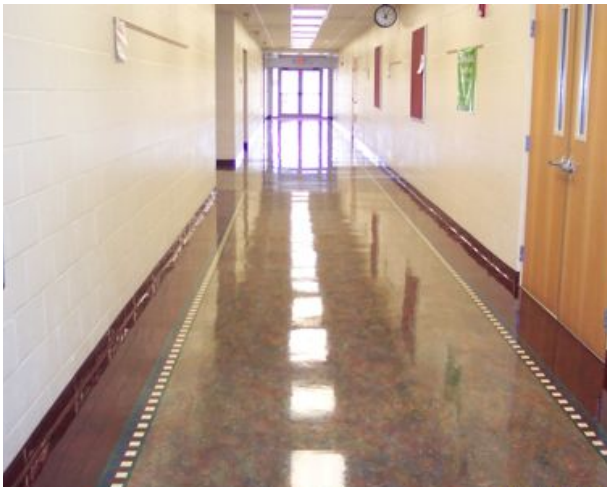
Environmentally Friendly Hard Floor Maintenance (continued from page 2)

All equipment must be designed with safeguards to protect the facility. The incorporation of rollers, bumpers and cord protectors are items that will help to prevent potential damage to the facility. Equipment must also be ergonomically correct for the technician to ensure less vibration and noise as well as reducing user fatigue. In the future more and more equipment will be manufactured under these guidelines.

Green cleaning is directly related to how the chemicals, equipment, tools and materials are selected and how programs are implemented. The purchase of sustainable hard floor maintenance chemicals and equipment that meets the sustainable criteria is part of the process as well as how they are handled and stored. Standard operating procedures are developed, managed and audited to ensure building occupants are protected. Training maintenance personnel in the safe use, disposal and/or recycling of these products are another important aspect of the green cleaning plan. All of this is established and included in each facilities green cleaning policies.

If you truly, absolutely must have “green” hard floor maintenance, the sustainable solution is simple, invest in the broom and dustpan. There are no harsh chemicals, abrasives, or coatings to contend with and very little impact on the environment. Unfortunately, it will be insufficient to maintain any facility in a manner that is acceptable. The future is “green” and its not going to change, it is up to all of us to make the necessary adjustments and find a way to make the dream a reality.

Stanley Q. Hulin is the Hard Floor Division Chair for the Institute of Inspection, Cleaning and Restoration Certification (IICRC), as well as the President of Future Floor Technology. He can be reached at sqhulin@futurefloortech.com



High Affinity Floor Finish

Amazing New
Floor Care
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A graphic for the 2012 Seminar Series. It features a large, detailed eye with a glowing blue iris and pupil, set against a dark blue background with faint grid lines and light effects. The text "2012 SEMINAR SERIES" is written in a large, white, sans-serif font to the right of the eye.

An enlightening series of seminars, designed to be educational and informative, as well as entertaining and enjoyable.

The 2012 Americhem Seminar Series Schedule

Provided by The ABD Group in specific locations in the Harrisburg, PA area.

February 23rd - Hands-On Equipment Rodeo & Open House! Try them all... Spin them, Ride them, Learn about them! Contests, Prizes... and more!

March 15th - Award-Winning Disinfection and Decontamination Seminar as presented to the US & Canadian Military, FEMA, Johns Hopkins and others. Presented by Mark Warner

April 20th - MC³ (Managed Commercial Carpet Care) - Covers all critical aspects of commercial carpet care, from job site analysis and costing analysis, to proposal generation and profitability requirements. Presented by John Holibaugh

May 11th - Customer Appreciation Day! Enjoy hotdogs and hamburgers on the Bar-B! Also, enjoy an entertaining day filled with contests and prizes, as well as engaging conversation with members of the Americhem team, as well as key suppliers. A good time is promised for all!

June 15th - Wood Floor Maintenance Program. Covers all aspects of wood floor care and maintenance, including gym floors, retail floors, residential floors, and the new Green floors (bamboo floors, etc.). Presented by Mark Warner, Technical Advisory Committee Chair for the IICRC/Clean Trust Wood Floor Maintenance Technician Certification course.

July 13th - IICRC's CCT Certification Course. CCT is the IICRC's Carpet Care Technician course, and is one of the most popular and highly attended courses offered by the IICRC. Presented by an authorized IICRC/Clean Trust Certified Instructor.

August 9th - LEED Buildings - Audits and Surveys. Covers all aspects of LEED EB certification requirements as outlined in the ISSA CIMS Program, including the identification of benchmarks that indicate the level of Green that a building has achieved.

More to come!

Sign up online at www.americhem.net

Thursday
February 23, 2012



2012
SEMINAR
SERIES

9:00 AM - 2:00 PM

Come and join us for this phenomenal day, promising to be highly informative, as well as wonderfully entertaining and enjoyable!

February 23, 9 AM – 2 PM - Open House

Americhem's Equipment Rodeo & Open House

Learn about the Leading Edge of Floor Care and Carpet Care Equipment! Learn about new floor machines, new burnishers, new walk-behind autoscrubbers, new ride-on autoscrubbers, new carpet extractors, new low moisture carpet systems, new self-contained washroom cleaning equipment, new warehouse sweepers, new self contained grout cleaning equipment, new leasing programs, and much more!

Contests! Prizes!

NO CHARGE!

NOT TO BE MISSED!

Sign up online at www.americhem.net

2012 AMERICHEM SEMINAR SERIES

presents

The 2012 Americhem Equipment Rodeo
FEBRUARY 23, 2012, 9:00 AM - 2:00 PM Open House
Americhem, 1401 AIP Drive, Middletown, PA 17057

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Thursday
March 15, 2012



2012
SEMINAR
SERIES

9:00 AM - 2:00 PM

Come and join us for this phenomenal seminar, this is a highly educational and informative program, as well as potentially life saving.

March 15th, 9 AM – 2 PM

Disinfection & Decontamination Seminar

Learn about the leading edge of disinfection and decontamination programs! Witness the award-winning program as presented to the US Military, the Canadian Military, FEMA, the US Senate, world-famous hospitals, etc. Learn about the DEFCON Environmental & Infectious Disease Threat Ranking System for proper development of housekeeping programs! Learn about the 3 dimensional approach to effectively neutralize outbreaks! Learn about Pandemic Preparedness program development! Learn about ATP meters and other tools for monitoring the effectiveness of the disinfectants and sanitizers, as well as the existing cleaning procedures! Presented by Mark Warner.

\$29.95 per person!

Americhem Education Coupons accepted!

Sign up online at www.americchem.net

2012 AMERICHEM SEMINAR SERIES

presents

Disinfection & Decontamination Seminar

March 15, 2012, 9:00 AM - 2:00 PM

Sheraton Harrisburg/Hershey, 4650 Lindle Road, Harrisburg, PA

COMPANY _____

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