
Environmentally Preferable Cleaning Products Sample Specifications

Statement of Policy

Many cleaning products contain chemicals that can be hazardous to custodial workers and building occupants. These chemicals can be acutely dangerous, causing respiratory irritation, chemical burns, or asthma attacks in children and adults, and/or they can be chronically hazardous to individuals who are exposed to them over a long period of time. Cost-competitive, environmentally preferable alternatives that meet performance specifications are readily available, and generally, products that are safer for people are safer for the environment as well.

In order to minimize the health and environmental impacts of maintaining _____,
_____ is electing to purchase environmentally preferable cleaning products.

_____ will specify, buy, and use, where feasible, only environmentally preferable custodial cleaning products.

Purpose

This policy is adopted to eliminate or reduce toxics that create hazards to workers and the environment. Some chemicals used in common cleaning products have been shown to cause adverse health effects and negatively affect indoor air quality. A growing body of research clearly shows a correlation between cleaning chemicals and asthma cases. This suggests that to minimize the potential for health and safety risks from cleaning products, the least toxic product that can perform the job should be purchased. In addition, toxic chemicals require special handling, storage, and disposal, which add to the cost of using, keeping, and disposing of these products.

Products

Bidders are to supply the following products:

1. General Purpose Cleaners
2. Bathroom Cleaners
3. Glass Cleaners
4. Carpet Cleaners
5. Disinfectants / Sanitizers
6. Floor-Care Products (all must be provided)
 - a. Floor Finishes
 - b. Floor Strippers
7. Hand Soaps

Training

The manufacturer, its distributor, or a third party must offer on-site (or at a designated site) training in the proper use of the product. This must include step-by-step instructions for the proper dilution, use, and disposal and for the use of equipment. In support of this training, the manufacturer or its distributor must provide a phone number that departments can call to receive instructions and assistance on product use.

Health and Environmental Specifications

The above products must meet the following health and safety specification:

- A. The undiluted product must not be toxic to humans.
- B. The undiluted product must not contain any ingredients that are carcinogens or that are known to cause reproductive toxicity, unless present in concentrations below the applicable maximum contaminant levels in drinking water.
- C. The undiluted product must not be corrosive to the skin or eyes, nor be a skin sensitizer.
- D. The undiluted product must not be combustible.
- E. The product as used must not contain substances that contribute significantly to the production of photochemical smog, tropospheric ozone, and poor indoor air quality. The volatile organic compound (VOC) of the product used must be less than 0.1% by weight. The product as used must not be toxic to aquatic life.
- F. The product as used must not contain more than 0.5% by weight of total phosphorus.
- G. Each of the organic ingredients must be readily biodegradable.
- H. The product must be a concentrate, except for FIFRA-registered bathroom cleaners.
- I. Manufacturers must identify any fragrances on their MSDSs, and they should follow the Code of Practice of the International Fragrance Association.
- J. The product must not contain the following ingredients:
 - Alkylphenol ethoxylates
 - Dibutyl phthalate
 - Heavy metals, including arsenic, lead, cadmium, cobalt, chromium, mercury, nickel, or selenium
 - Ozone-depleting compounds
- K. In addition, vendors shall provide information as to whether their products contain ingredients that may be identified as astmagens (asthma-causing agents), such as:
 - Monoethanolamine (CAS 141-43-5)
 - Tall oil or rosin (CAS 8002-26-4)
 - Chlorhexidine (CAS 55-56-1)
 - Chloramine T (CAS 127-65-1)
 - Ammonium quaternary disinfectants (not limited to the following CAS numbers: 8001-54-5, 121-54-0, 122-18-9, 8044-71-1, 124-03-5, 122-19-0)

Full listing available at <http://www.aoc.org/tools.htm>

All products shall meet the Green Seal Industrial and Institutional Cleaners Standard (GS-37) or Green Seal Floor Care Standards (GS-40) criteria or have undergone testing to demonstrate compliance with Green Seal's GS-37 or GS-40 criteria.

Labeling

The manufacturer's label must state clearly and prominently that dilution with water from the cold tap is recommended and shall state the recommended level of dilution. The manufacturer shall

also include detailed instructions for proper use and disposal and for the use of personal protective equipment.

Product Specific Requirements

Carpet Cleaners

Carpet cleaners must meet Health and Environmental Specifications established above. Carpet cleaners must exhibit a VOC limit of not greater than 0.1%.

Disinfectants / Sanitizers

Disinfectants / sanitizers must meet the Health and Environmental Specifications established above, EXCEPT for the active ingredients with respect to biodegradability.

Disinfectants / sanitizers must exhibit a VOC limit of not greater than 0.1%.

Disinfectants / sanitizers must be registered by the US Environmental Protection Agency.

Floor-Care Products (all must be provided)

- a. Floor Finishes
- b. Floor Strippers
- c. Maintenance Products

All floor-care products must be free of zinc and other heavy metals.

Floor-care products must not contain phthalates.

Floor-care products must not contain glycol ethers or ammonia.

It is preferable that the floor finish does not need to be stripped prior to reapplications of the floor finish.

Floor strippers must exhibit a VOC limit of not greater than 0.1%.

Maintenance products must exhibit a VOC limit of not greater than 0.1%.

Hand Soaps

These products must not be anti-microbial (a low-level preservative is permissible, however, to prevent bacterial growth). Non-scented is preferred.

Non-animal testing

It is required that bidders' products not be tested on animals. To discourage animal testing, the results of past peer-reviewed or standard tests demonstrating compliance with a criterion will be accepted. In addition, a mixture need not be tested (or retested) if existing information demonstrates that each of the ingredients complies with a criterion.

Priorities

The health and safety of workers and citizens is of utmost importance and takes precedence over all other policies.

This policy shall not be construed as requiring a department, purchaser, or contractor to procure products that do not perform adequately for their intended use, exclude adequate competition, or are not available at a reasonable price in a reasonable period of time.

Program Evaluation

The _____ shall review this policy on an annual basis to evaluate the success of the policy's implementation.

Definitions

“Asthmagens” are chemicals known to cause asthma in a person who never had asthma prior to exposure. A list of asthmagens is available at the following Association of Occupational and Environmental Clinics (AOEC) website: <http://www.aoec.org/tools.htm>

Asthmagens are listed with the Exposure Code “A.”

“Environmentally Preferable Cleaning Products” are defined as products that have a lesser or reduced effect on human health and the environment when compared with competing products or services that serve the same purposes.

Resources

INFORM, Inc., offers a *Cleaning for Health Guide*: http://www.informinc.org/cfh_00.php.

Center for the New American Dream provides information about products that meet the above specifications: <http://www.newdream.org/procure/products/approved.php>

Green Seal provides information about less toxic cleaning products:
<http://www.greenseal.org/certproducts.htm#cleaners>

The US Environmental Protection Agency’s Environmentally Preferable Purchasing Program website provides general information about environmentally preferable purchasing at <http://www.epa.gov/oppt/epp>, guidance on specific products at <http://www.epa.gov/epp/pubs/pfs.htm>, and a database of environmental information for products and services at <http://yosemite1.epa.gov/oppt/eppstand2.nsf/pages/search.html?open>.

Examples of specifications written by state purchasing agencies are available at:
Commonwealth of Massachusetts: <http://www.mass.gov/epp>

State of Connecticut: http://www.das.state.ct.us/rfpdoc/004_0070.pdf

State of Vermont: <http://www.bgs.state.vt.us/pca>