

Day Cleaning

What is Day Cleaning?

Day cleaning is an alternative to traditional nighttime custodial services that have been common among office properties for the past century.¹ With cutting costs on electricity as a priority for many businesses, day cleaning is an often-overlooked measure that can cut back on the amount of time a building is in operation and reduce the amount of time lights are on in a building.

Many small office buildings operate approximately 55 hours per week with ten of those hours (2 hours per day) used on custodial services before and after normal business hours. Often, when buildings are cleaned all lights are turned on for the entire cleaning process and turned off when the cleaning staff leaves. Lights are sometimes left on, however, not only overnight but also throughout the weekends.² With day cleaning, the custodial staff can work during regular hours of operation. This helps secure the building at night and avoids having the cleaning staff vulnerable to security concerns at night. With cleaning taking place during regular operating hours, facility lights can be turned off at night, reducing electricity costs. Day cleaning should include green cleaning practices to avoid creating indoor air quality problems since the building will be occupied while cleaning is underway.



Figure 1 Mop and bucket
(Source: Flickr
<http://www.flickr.com/photos/cogdog/528645949/>)

How to Implement Day Cleaning

There are various operational issues that should be taken into consideration when implementing day cleaning strategies.³

- What kind of traffic is common to the building?

¹Sam Black. "Day-cleaning janitorial services gaining steam as property managers look for new ways to save money." *Minneapolis St. Paul Business Journal*. Aug 7(2009).
<http://twincities.bizjournals.com/twincities/stories/2009/08/10/focus1.html?t=printable> (accessed January 28, 2010).

²John Klein, Sharon Levin, & Karen Cloutier, "No-Cost Energy-Savings Strategies." *Institute for Real Estate Management* (2005). *IREM First*.
<http://www.iremfirst.org/if/knowledgebase/Energy%20Conservation/goldStandard/No-Cost%20Energy-Savings%20Strategies.jsessionid=8CB3BC8CA9C30DD5E7C32B4CD69E0573> (accessed January 28, 2010).

³Lowe's Commercial Services. Day Cleaning: Is it Right for Your Facility?
<http://www.lowesforpros.com/day-cleaning-is-it-right-for-your-facility> (accessed May 4, 2011).

Each tenant or business may have a different relationship with its client or customer base. Some offices have a great deal of traffic or high-profile customers during the day and might find that numbers of custodians working during the day interferes with those activities. In addition, if the building undergoes heavy use that results in soiling of surfaces regularly it may be most efficient to clean at the end of the day. An occupied building is generally more difficult to clean than an unoccupied space.

Related Strategies
[Green Cleaning](#)

- Does the business require a few custodial individuals or teams of custodial staff?

The size of the business can also influence the feasibility of day cleaning. Individuals can often work unobtrusively except for larger projects (e.g., floor cleaning) and teams can be assigned on a staggered basis according to the best times to clean particular areas.

- What are the schedules of the custodial staff or subcontractor?

Some reliable custodial employees may also be those that rely on a night cleaning schedule as a second job. Obtaining information on the flexibility of the service to manage this schedule is important.

A flexible cleaning schedule program may be the best option for commercial buildings with more complicated activity patterns.⁴ In this way a day cleaning program can be instituted for those areas and activities where there is least interference with business practices. Ultimately, the possible move to a day cleaning schedule must be examined carefully; it is not for every building.

Making the Transition⁵

- After getting management approval and occupant support, the next step is to develop a scope of work to implement the day cleaning program. Communicating the benefits and expectations of day cleaning to the custodial staff and tenants/office workers (e.g., energy and cost savings, coordinating activities) will help facilitate the schedule change.
- It is important to keep upper management involved in this step to support the process and to achieve successful implementation.

⁴International Custodial Advisors Network (ICAN). <http://www.icanatex.com/Answer.asp?ID=35> (accessed May 4, 2011).

⁵ Cleaning and Maintenance Management. Going from night to Day Cleaning can save money, put pride in your cleaning operation. (Frank, Spencer, Rathey, & Jurecki, 2006). <http://www.cmmonline.com/articleprint.asp?print=1&IndexID=6636065> (accessed January 19, 2010).

- Create a spreadsheet to help determine the scope of work, including labor hour requirements, schedule for specific areas of the space, and job descriptions for employees.
- Develop a communications plan to inform and educate all occupants of the building about the day cleaning program, beginning about eight weeks prior to full implementation, increasing the frequency of communication with occupants as the transition date approaches.
- Select the appropriate low-toxin chemical systems, cleaning equipment, and train the staff on best practices for day cleaning. Quieter equipment and practices may be called for during business hours.
- When transitioning from cleaning at night to day cleaning, it often works best to stop night cleaning on a Friday night and begin day cleaning on the following Monday. This allows the staff to use the weekend for orientation and stocking the supply closet properly.

Examples

State Farm Implements Day Cleaning

By shifting to day cleaning in 2000, State Farm slashed its energy bills nearly nine percent. They also can cut cleaning costs by eight to 10 percent annually, which quickly adds up.⁶

<http://www.cleanlink.com/hs/article/Day-Cleaning-Casting-Light-On-Cleaning-Operations--11727>

Ryan Cos US Inc., Property Management Company, Sees Cost Reductions from Day Cleaning

The health care corporate headquarters located in the mixed-use building managed by Ryan Cos. US Inc. now has eight percent lower energy costs than other comparable buildings because of its transition to day cleaning.⁷

<http://www.lowesforpros.com/day-cleaning-is-it-right-for-your-facility>

⁶ Cleanlink.com. <http://www.cleanlink.com/hs/article/Day-Cleaning-Casting-Light-On-Cleaning-Operations--11727> (accessed April 30, 2011).

⁷ Lowesforpros.com. <http://www.lowesforpros.com/day-cleaning-is-it-right-for-your-facility> (accessed April 30, 2011).

Benefits

Implementing day cleaning:

- Reduces nighttime energy loads
- Reduces use of energy and therefore air pollution (if still using non-renewable energy)
- Reduces energy costs by 4-8%⁸
- Offers more custodial positions during day time hours
- Reduces labor costs, depending on specifics of day cleaning procedures and schedule

Costs

There are no major installations or capital investments. Minor costs include temporary increases in management and training. Some loud equipment (e.g., vacuum cleaners) and cleaners (i.e., those with strong chemical odors) may need to be replaced for more appropriate / less disruptive day-time use.

Resources

Day Cleaning Energy Saving Calculator

<http://www.cleanforhealth.com/daycleaning.htm>

Day Cleaning: Reaping the Benefits

<http://www.cleanlink.com/hs/article/Day-Cleaning-Reaping-The-Benefits--8585>

Lowe's Commercial Services: Day Cleaning

<http://www.lowesforpros.com/day-cleaning-is-it-right-for-your-facility>

⁸ Clean Sweep: How a new approach to cleaning commercial buildings in the Twin Cities can protect our health and the environment while securing jobs and saving money. Local 26. SEIU. Blue Green Alliance. http://www.bluegreenalliance.org/admin/publications/files/2010-01-BGA-report_FINAL.pdf (accessed May 14, 2010).