

Sustainable Purchasing Guide

Cleaning Chemical Products



Use this Guide When Purchasing

- General/multi-purpose cleaners
- Glass cleaners
- Floor & carpet cleaners
- Non-disinfecting restroom cleaners
- Specialty cleaners such as: degreasers, dishwashing detergents, laundry detergent, wood & metal polishes, and drain cleaners

Keeping your facility clean is one of the most important ways to maintain a healthy indoor environment, but using some cleaning products may actually increase indoor air pollution. Using products that meet the Minimum Requirements below will, when properly used, not only meet performance requirements, but also reduce custodial workers' and occupants' exposure to harmful chemicals.



How to Purchase

Check with your central procurement office or administrative or facilities staff to find out if you have any contracts that employees are required to use to purchase cleaning products. When you are seeking these products in a store or online, check the product details to confirm it meets the Minimum Requirements listed below. If cleaning products are included in your custodial service contracts, require vendors to use products that meet the following Minimum Requirements as well.

Product Requirements - *specify or seek:*

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS/SPECIFICATIONS	LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Product currently has at least one of the following low-toxicity certifications:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Green Seal• Safer Choice• UL ECOLOGO• Not be packaged in an aerosol container	<p><i>Minimum Requirements plus one or more of the following:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Concentrated products with a built-in or compatible closed-loop dilution control system• Fragrance-free• USDA Biobased certified• Not a single-use disposable wipe product• Packaging is recyclable in your municipal system

Ecolabels to Look For



Please note: Green Seal updated its logo in Oct 2024. Products may still display the old logo during the transition period.

Related Tips

- Have the product vendor provide training on the proper use, storage, and disposal of its green cleaning products, especially any concentrated chemicals. Failing to use products and dispensing systems according to the manufacturer's instructions can result in poor product performance, costly overuse, and/or harmful exposure to concentrated chemicals.
- Reduce the number of different cleaning products you use. For example, use a multi-purpose cleaner for most cleaning tasks. Concentrated multi-purpose cleaners can be diluted at different rates to accommodate various cleaning tasks (glass cleaning to heavy-duty cleaning).
- Limit the use of air fresheners. Instead, work to identify and remedy the cause of persistent odors, such as poor air circulation, clogged floor drains, mildew, mold, or stains.
- If your facility needs to update its product dispensing systems to begin using products that meet the Minimum Requirements, check first to see if the distributor or product manufacturer of the compliant products offers applicable dispensing systems at no cost.
- Invest in reusable cleaning tools, such as microfiber cloths, when laundry facilities or services are available.
- Safely dispose of unused cleaning chemicals by using StopWaste's [re:source](#) online tool to find applicable disposal facilities in your area.

Benefits

Buying certified green cleaning products:

- Supports healthy indoor environments for building occupants and cleaning staff by reducing exposures to toxic chemicals that can cause eye, skin, and respiratory irritation; and chronic health issues such as asthma, reproductive problems, and cancer.
- Reduces the amount of toxic chemicals going down the drain, which supports healthier aquatic ecosystems.

Buying concentrated cleaning products:

- Reduces waste due to less packaging per volume of usable cleaner.
- Decreases transportation impacts per volume of usable cleaner.
- Is more cost-effective on a per-use basis than ready-to-use cleaners.

Additional Resources

- [San Francisco Green Cleaning Resources](#)
- [Alameda County Green Purchasing Success Stories: Janitorial Cleaning Products](#)
- Check the [StopWaste Sustainable Purchasing Website](#) for additional implementation resources such as: [compliant product lists](#), [contracting resources](#), and other support tools.

PRODUCT REGISTRIES

Find/verify certified green cleaning products by using the following online certified product registries:

- [Green Seal](#) Product Registry
- [Safer Choice](#) Product Registry
- [UL SPOT](#) Product Registry (filter by product type and UL ECOLOGO certification)

Updated Dec 2024