

Sarasota County Government

Green Housekeeping Policy

Sarasota County Government has an organizational commitment to the principles of sustainability. As such, we recognize the importance of balancing community, economic, and environmental needs. In addition to ensuring that our working practices reflect these philosophies, we recognize that our work environment must also mirror a sustainability ethic. We have a duty to ensure that our organization is economically viable, that our buildings are healthy, accessible, welcoming, meet the information and support needs of the citizens we serve, and that we work in a way that respects and safeguards our environment and human health.

Sarasota County has adopted this Green Housekeeping Policy to improve the health and safety of building occupants, visitors, and maintenance workers by requiring the use of effective, safer, environmentally preferable janitorial cleaning products.

The combined effect of the use of inappropriate cleaners, solvents, and other chemicals in public buildings may have a substantial impact on the safety and health of the people who use these materials, as well as the people within those buildings. Many traditional cleaning products contain chemicals that present a variety of human health and environmental concerns. Switching from traditional cleaning products to the use of biodegradable, low toxicity, or otherwise less harmful products can improve the environmental profile of routine cleaning activities without sacrificing cleaning effectiveness.

Building problems relating to indoor environmental quality, such as “Sick Building Syndrome,” “Building-Related Illness,” and Legionnaire’s Disease, are examples of problems significantly affected by or directly resulting from poor housekeeping and maintenance. Recent studies suggest that increased absenteeism, low morale, and decreased worker productivity may be attributed, at least in part, to poor or “unhealthy” indoor environments and appropriate environmentally friendly housekeeping and maintenance activities can help to mitigate.

It is Sarasota County Government’s intent to promote a comfortable, healthy, and clean working environment and reduce our environmental footprint by utilizing environmentally preferable cleaning products and practices. Sarasota County Procurement Code, Ordinance No. 2003-084, Section 2-230 Environmentally Preferred Procurement (EPP), states “Preference shall be given to products and services that have a lesser or reduced effect on human health and the environment when compared to other products and services that serve the same purpose.” We require cleaners procured under our janitorial services contracts to have independent, non-profit third party certification through the Green Seal standard for Industrial and Institutional Cleaners (GS-37).

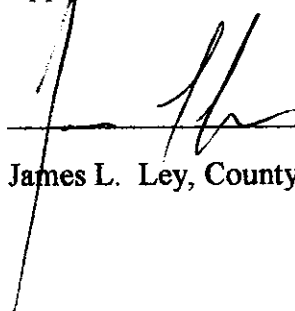
The products shall be free from toxic and environmentally damaging chemicals. Cleaning solutions are considered using the following criteria:

- Toxicity to both humans and aquatic life
- Biodegradability
- Corrosivity/pH
- Volatile organic compound levels
- Availability in concentrated form
- Utility for multiple cleaning purposes
- Additives that may have an effect on biodegradability, worker health, and aquatic life.

Additionally, our Green Housekeeping Policy requires:

- Staff to seek out new products, practices and services to support the Green Housekeeping Policy
- Update as required purchasing guidelines, which supplement the Green Housekeeping Policy
- Obtain feedback from staff on the efficacy of the Green Housekeeping Policy
- Products in refillable or recyclable containers in order to minimize waste generation.

Approved:



James L. Ley, County Administrator

3/3/05
Date