

# LUTHER COLLEGE

## POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

---

Department: Facilities Services  
Subject: Green Cleaning Policy  
Date Issued: May 2, 2013  
Date Revised:  
Approved By:

---

### **I. Policy**

When procuring cleaning products, Luther and its contractors will purchase products certified or recommended by Green Seal or the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC) or another independent environmental certification organization.

### **II. Purpose**

Luther College has made a commitment to reducing its carbon footprint and promoting the environmental, social, and financial sustainability of the institution. To that end, this policy relates to the use and purchase of any cleaning materials on campus. All branches of the college and its contractors will follow these guidelines except in situations when cost or other factors are shown to be prohibitive.

The goals of this policy are as follows:

- To reduce the environmental and human health impact of cleaning products used on campus.
- To create standards for cleaning products used on campus.
- To provide guidelines for cleaning practices to campus departments and contractors

### **III. Scope**

In the use of cleaning products and equipment Luther and its contractors will minimize water, energy, and product usage and will train its employees to conduct their duties in ways that minimize usage in all campus buildings.

### **IV. Terms and Definitions**

#### **Definition of Green Cleaning**

Green cleaning is defined as cleaning to protect health without harming the environment. The chemicals used in cleaning products have been linked to multiple chemical sensitivity syndrome, allergies, contact dermatitis, headaches, dry eyes, nausea, dizziness, and fatigue. Instituting a green cleaning program helps to improve indoor air quality, which in turn, helps to increase workers' productivity, decrease absenteeism, and reduce medical and insurance costs. Green cleaning also takes into consideration the product's entire life cycle, favoring concentrated products that are packaged in reduced, refillable, or recyclable packaging. Green cleaning emphasizes the environmental sustainability of cleaning operations and overall building health (i.e. indoor air quality) and not solely evaluates building cleanliness based on appearance.

### **Definition of Green Seal Products**

Green Seal products are those products which are certified by Green Seal, a non-profit offering third party certification for products which meet their sustainability standards.

### **Definition of U.S. Green Building Council Products**

U.S. Green Building Council Products are those certified by the USGBC's Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) program.

### **Definition of Cleaning Products**

This policy defines cleaning products as:

- A. Cleaning supplies including:
  - Hand soaps and sanitizers
  - Laundry detergents and fabric softeners
  - Dish soap and detergents
  - Surface cleaners
  - All-purpose cleaners
  - Bathroom cleaners
  - Disinfectants
  - Glass cleaners
  - Floor cleaning and care products
  - All other cleaning agents
- B. Cleaning equipment.
- C. Trash bags or can liners.
- D. Janitorial paper products including:
  - Paper towels
  - Toilet paper
- E. Matting (as in entrance mats).

### **V. Procedures and Guidelines**

When procuring cleaning products, Luther College personnel and contractors will consult the list of Green Seal products, USGBC products, or products certified by other independent certifying bodies. In the absence of products certified as sustainable alternatives by independent organizations, Luther and its contractors will utilize the attached appendix of purchasing guidelines as a resource and purchase the products they deem as the most environmentally and socially responsible.

### **VI. Confidentiality, Records, and Reports**

Records on all cleaning products purchased will be kept on file at the appropriate department. All records are open to any Luther student or employee upon request.

The Manager of Environmental Services will provide a verbal or written report of green cleaning practices to the Food, Purchasing and Waste Task Group on an annual basis.

## VII. Resources

- Green Seal certified paper products:  
<http://www.greenseal.org/FindGreenSealProductsandServices.aspx?vid=ViewProductDetail&cid=12>
- Green Seal certified cleaning supplies:  
<http://www.greenseal.org/FindGreenSealProductsandServices.aspx?vid=ViewProductDetail&cid=16>
- EPA guide to buying recycled content paper products:  
<http://www.epa.gov/epawaste/conserve/tools/cpg/pdf/paper.pdf>
- See the USGBC's LEED Reference Guide for Green Building Operations and Maintenance available at: [http://www.usgbc.org/Store/PublicationsList\\_New.aspx?CMSPageID=1518](http://www.usgbc.org/Store/PublicationsList_New.aspx?CMSPageID=1518)

## Appendix

### Purchasing Guideline

This appendix is designed to serve as a guideline in the purchase of green cleaning products when independent certifications are not available. The guideline lists considerations for several types of products. This guideline is not a mandate that products purchased meet all of the recommendations; ultimately the decision of what is responsible is left up to the purchaser.

<b>Product Category</b>	<b>Preferred characteristics</b>
All Products	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Have the least packaging.</li><li>- Are packaged in material with the most recycled content.</li><li>- Are packaged in recyclable packaging</li></ul>
Paper Products	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Meet or exceed EPA recommendations for recycled content.</li><li>- Do not contain bleach.</li></ul>
Cleaning Equipment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Are durable, have the least frequent need for repair or replacement.</li><li>- Are energy efficient, both in their running requirements but in the energy required to do the job.</li></ul>
Cleaning Supplies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Are biodegradable.</li><li>- Do not contain antibiotics.</li><li>- Have a pH closest to neutral (7).</li></ul>
Trash bags	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Made with the most recycled content.</li></ul>
Matting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Are durable.</li><li>- Made with the most recycled content.</li></ul>