

Standardizing Facility Cleaning and Maintenance

by Daniel S. Wagner

Ask most higher education presidents to list 10 campus issues that concern them and I can guarantee that the cleanliness of facilities will not be included on the list. Expand the list to include the top 25 issues of concern, and cleaning is still likely nowhere to be found. Yet, the cleaning and maintenance of facilities is paramount with growing public health threats and increased occupant demands. It can also add up to 40 percent of most campus maintenance and operations budgets.

Last summer, APPA released the results of a comprehensive study on the effects of facilities on student recruitment and retention, concluding that the condition of an institution's facilities can have a tremendous impact on college choice. (*More than 16,000 college students from 46 institutions across the U.S. and Canada completed a recruitment and retention survey as part of the study.*) In fact, 76 percent of the study's respondents agreed that facility condition was important in their choice regarding which institution to attend. The study, *The Impact of Facilities on the Recruitment and Retention of Students*, was conducted by APPA's Center for Facilities Research (CFaR) and confirmed the findings of a study conducted in the 1980's by the Carnegie Foundation, which concluded the biggest influential factor for prospective students in selecting a college was the appearance of campus grounds and buildings.

Daniel S. Wagner is standards development manager and manager of regulatory compliance for ISSA, the experts on cleaning and maintenance in Lincolnwood, Illinois. He can be reached at daniel@issa.com.



It is clear that universities and colleges need to take a closer look at how facilities are maintained and perceived by prospective students, staff, and visitors, who will not accept substandard conditions. Cleaning plays a major role in maintaining the attractive outward appearance of facilities and indoor environment in a manner that protects building occupants from potentially harmful microorganisms. However, it is becoming increasingly difficult to perform the necessary cleaning and maintenance services and meet occupant needs in a world of shrinking budgets and rising expectations. New and increasingly difficult challenges are arising every day and innovative resources are needed to help navigate through a maze of uncertainty.

Enter the new ISSA Cleaning Industry Management Standard (CIMS), a management framework designed to assist cleaning departments in developing and maintaining effective and efficient operations, as

well as to help qualify contract service providers. Based on universally-accepted management principles that have proven to be the hallmarks of successful service providers, CIMS provides a cleaning department with the structure needed to perform services in the most productive and "customer-focused" manner.

Providing quality cleaning services in an efficient and effective manner depends on having the right systems, processes, and policies in place, as well as making sure that they are implemented throughout the chain. With this premise as its backbone, CIMS demands open and honest communication with the "customer"—the administrator, student or other building occupants. It also requires understanding of staffing and service requirements, and the effective management of the most valuable asset we have—human resources. And it relies on a commitment to worker safety, health, and environmental stewardship, as well as the dedication of management at all levels.

While it may seem like a daunting task to review your entire department management structure, CIMS offers an easy to follow road map, leading to operational success. The Standard is divided into five key sections:

1. Quality Systems
2. Service Delivery
3. Human Resources
4. Safety, Health & Environmental Stewardship
5. Management Commitment

With these tools, it is easier to validate the efforts of an in-house cleaning department and demonstrate a commitment to quality service deliv-

Continued on page 14

Continued from page 12

ery. With the ever-present threat of outsourcing hanging over an in-house cleaning department's head, CIMS can help promote a department's attributes to upper management and act as a tool to evaluate and elevate operations.

Further, those educational institutions that outsource portions of their cleaning services can take advantage

of CIMS, by using it to pre-qualify contractors, helping assure that a provider's management systems are structured to deliver the services that you expect.

Today, any building service contractor can claim that they are dedicated to quality and meeting customer needs, but CIMS provides a comprehensive checklist and outlines the management principles that every

...universities and colleges need to take a closer look at how facilities are maintained and perceived by prospective students, staff, and visitors, who will not accept substandard conditions.

service contract should demand. Require CIMS compliance in your contract specifications, and you take the guesswork out of the equation by lowering the risk that your contracted organization will be unable to deliver the quality service you require.

While some standards are often difficult to merge with existing operational frameworks, CIMS is non-prescriptive and, therefore, does not require or even recommend the use of specific products or cleaning procedures. It allows each organization to select and utilize those products, methods, and procedures that are most appropriate for a particular situation. As CIMS was being developed, all participants agreed that maintaining flexibility was of paramount importance.

CIMS was developed through a true consensus-based effort that involved collaboration between the cleaning, facility management, higher education, and purchasing communities, ultimately involving organizations representing more than 100,000 constituents. Serving as an advisor to the development process was APPA's President-Elect Alan Bigger, director of building services at the University of Notre Dame, who helped ISSA and the Standard development technical committee better understand how the Standard applies to higher education cleaning departments.

CIMS delivers the management structure that can lead you on the path to operational success. It is a powerful tool that outlines the basic



Rental Solutions

What would be lost if a building's HVAC or Power system were to break down for a lengthy period? Tenants, revenue, or even life! These systems are such an integral part of our everyday life that even temporary shutdowns are unacceptable.
The solution - **Carrier Rental Systems.**

Typical Applications

- Supplemental Tower Water
- Supplemental Heating
- Supplemental Steam
- Temp. HVAC Systems
- Backup HVAC Systems
- Comfort Cooling
- Clean Room Humidity Control
- Water Damage Drying
- Emergency Power
- Construction Site Humidity and Ventilation Control

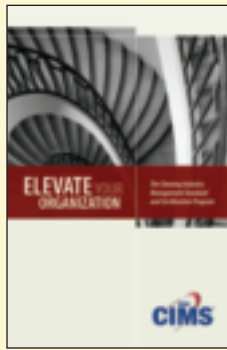
For additional information and equipment specifications, check our web site www.hvacportablesystems.com or call 800-586-9020 today and find out why we are "The Ones to Call!"

800-586-9020
www.hvacportablesystems.com

Carrier
Rental Systems
New Name. Same Great Solutions.

A Subsidiary of Carrier Corporation. Formerly doing business as HVAC Portable Systems.

management principles that need to be installed to maximize efficiency and facilitate the delivery of quality service. Gary E. Reynolds, facilities director at Colorado College and one of the primary authors of the APPA study *The Impact of Facilities on the Recruitment and Retention of Students* noted that “the best and brightest students will choose those institutions that commit to providing a high-quality learning environment” and cleanliness plays a crucial role in preserving such an environment. Cleanliness may not be on the president’s top 10 list, but you can bet that the students, staff, and campus visitors will be grateful that their institution has made the commitment. 🏢



For more information on the ISSA Cleaning Industry Management Standard (CIMS) and Certification Program, and a complimentary self-assessment checklist, please visit www.issa.com/standard or contact ISSA at 800-225-4772; cims@issa.com.

Become CIMS Certified

ISSA is developing a certification program to allow cleaning organizations to distinguish themselves in the market and identify themselves as leaders committed to the delivery of consistent, quality services. To become certified, an organization must undergo a comprehensive assessment by an accredited third party and demonstrate compliance with the elements of CIMS.

Certification is expected to be available to all cleaning organizations in October 2007. In the meantime, 24 organizations have been selected to participate in the CIMS Case Study Certification Program, including both the University of Michigan and the University of Guelph. Both universities have made a commitment to achieving certification and, in the process, improving the efficiency and effectiveness of their cleaning operations. Should they successfully establish compliance with CIMS, they will position themselves as leaders who are equipped to help the entire higher education community understand the real-world benefits associated with improved service and cleanliness.

Departments who wish to position themselves at the front of the line, in anticipation of the full industry certification launch later this year, are encouraged to apply today and schedule their future assessments. Certification applications are available at www.issa.com/standard/certification.jsp.

Those institutions that outsource cleaning services are encouraged to take advantage of CIMS certification as a pre-qualification tool by requiring certification in their existing specifications.

This fall Daniel Wagner, ISSA standards development manager, will present findings from the University of Michigan and the University of Guelph’s participation in the Case Study Certification Program in *Facilities Manager*.



Teamwork is the combined efforts of a talented group of people to accomplish a common goal.

Our team is ready to help with your next capital program or construction project.