

Levels of Cleaning

Custodial Staffing Guidelines for Educational Facilities, 1992

APPA, The Association of Higher Education Facilities Officers

Level 1 – Orderly Spotlessness

Level 1 establishes cleaning at the highest level. It was developed for the corporate suite, the donated building or the historical focal point. This is show-quality cleaning for that prime facility.

- Floors and base mouldings shine and/or are bright and clean; colors are fresh. There is no buildup in corners or along walls.
- All vertical and horizontal surfaces have a freshly cleaned or polished appearance and have no accumulation of dust, dirt, marks, streaks, smudges or fingerprints.
- Washroom and shower tile and fixtures gleam and are odor-free. Supplies are adequate.
- Trash containers and pencil sharpeners are empty, clean and odor-free.

Level 2 – Ordinary Tidiness

Level 2 is the base upon which this study is established. This is the level at which cleaning should be maintained. Lower levels for washrooms, changing/locker rooms and similar type facilities are not acceptable.

- Floors and base mouldings shine and/or are bright and clean. There is no buildup in corners or along walls, but there can be up to two days' worth of dirt, dust, stains or streaks.
- All vertical and horizontal surfaces are clean, but marks, dust, smudges and fingerprints are noticeable with close observation.
- Washroom and shower tile and fixtures gleam and are odor-free. Supplies are adequate.
- Trash containers and pencil sharpeners are empty, clean and odor-free.

Level 3 – Casual Inattention

This level reflects the first budget cut, or some other staffing- related problem. It is a lowering of normal expectations. While not totally acceptable, it has yet to reach an unacceptable level of cleanliness.

- Floors are swept clean, but upon observation dust, dirt and stains, as well as a buildup of dirt, dust and/or floor finish in corners and along walls, can be seen.
- There are dull spots and/or matted carpet in walking lanes and streaks and splashes on base molding.
- All vertical and horizontal surfaces have obvious dust, dirt, marks, smudges and fingerprints.
- Lamps all work and all fixtures are clean.
- Trash containers and pencil sharpeners are empty, clean and odor-free.

**Level 4 – Moderate
Dinginess**

Level 4 reflects the second budget cut, or some other significant staffing-related problem. Areas are becoming unacceptable. People begin to accept an environment lacking normal cleanliness. In fact, the facility begins to constantly look like it requires a good “spring cleaning.”

- Floors are swept clean, but are dull. Colors are dingy and there is an obvious buildup of dust, dirt and/or floor finish in corners and along walls. Moulding is dull and contains streaks and splashes.
- All vertical and horizontal surfaces have conspicuous dust, dirt, smudges, fingerprints and marks that will be difficult to remove.
- Less than 5 percent of lamps are burned out and fixtures are dingy.
- Trash containers and pencil sharpeners have old trash and shavings. They are stained and marked. Trash cans smell sour.

**Level 5 – Unkempt
Neglect**

This is the final and lowest level. The trucking industry would call this “just-in-time cleaning.” The facility is always dirty, with cleaning accomplished at an unacceptable level.

- Floors and carpets are dirty and have visible wear and/or pitting. Colors are faded and dingy and there is a conspicuous buildup of dirt, dust and/or floor finish in corners and along walls. Base moulding is dirty, stained and streaked. Gum, stains, dirt dust balls and trash are broadcast.
- All vertical and horizontal surfaces have major accumulations of dust, dirt, smudges and fingerprints, as well as damage. It is evident that no maintenance or cleaning is done on these surfaces.
- More than 5 percent of lamps are burned out and fixtures are dirty with dust balls and flies.
- Trash containers and pencil sharpeners overflow. They are stained and marked. Trash containers smell sour.