

# What Cleaning Can You Do?

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As has been a practice on campus for many years, non-custodial employees can supplement the cleaning services Academic Custodial Services (ACS) provides. The supplemental cleaning should not replace the duties and responsibilities assigned to our ACS staff. In general, if an employee wants to take immediate action to clean up a spill, vacuum up a mess, or wipe down their desk, they can. The supplemental cleaning should be limited in nature and may include:

- Simple non-reoccurring cleaning
- Cleaning that does not violate Western's agreement's with the various labor bargaining units
- Cleaning in line with environmental/work place regulations.

More specifically this translates to the following:

- The cleaning you provide does not take away work from ACS. How do you decide this? The easiest way is to limit your cleaning to one-time non-reoccurring events such as:
  - Your three hole punch spills on the floor and you clean up the paper dots.
  - You spill a drink and clean up the initial spill. This does not mean applying carpet cleaning to remove the stain. That should be left to ACS.
- Your cleaning activities do not require labor and material/equipment expenditures for routine cleaning. Examples:
  - If departments are not satisfied with cleaning levels it is not appropriate for them to purchase vacuums and do routine reoccurring vacuuming. If each department purchases vacuums and spends staff time vacuuming then the unions will argue that if those funds were redirected ACS would be funded to provide the services needed. The only exceptions to this is high security or high risk spaces that ACS staff is not allowed to access.
    - Note: ACS is not reducing vacuuming services or frequency within the spaces cleaned. Their vacuuming program continues to have a high "cleaning for health" priority.
  - Departments are allowed to purchase vacuums for one-time clean-ups such as three hole punch dot spills.
- Your cleaning activities must be limited to use only chemicals approved by Environmental Health and Safety (EHS).
- Your cleaning activities improve not degrade the area's cleanliness and environment. The best example is vacuuming equipment that is not properly maintained. Inadequate vacuum procedures in an occupied areas can liberating dust, spores and other allergens into the area and can cause increased occupant risk and complaints. By extracting particles from one surface and releasing it into the air one can actually increased the indoor pollution in the office environment.
- Michael Berry in his book **Protecting the Built Environment** says:

"Sometimes equipment causes more mess than benefit. Poor equipment can generate as much pollution as it extracts. Even good equipment is not perfect. For example, vacuum cleaners always generate some particles. As particles are broken free from a surface, some become airborne and get caught in the turbulence created by air flowing into the machine. Some of these spin further into the air beyond the machine.

Some equipment may not be equal to the task. Some vacuum cleaners are not strong enough to pull a particle out of or off of a fibrous surface. Others pull a particle out of the environment it came from. In short, the capture efficiency of equipment is a very important consideration in the cleaning process."

The purchase and use of inadequate vacuums by untrained people in occupied areas can increase the risks associated with living inside a contained structure because contaminants are not normally broken down or diluted as they are in an outdoor environment.