

The HandL Helpline

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JohnsonDiversey
Clean is just the beginning



INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

COVERS	5
CORNER	
UNION DESPERATE	1
WORKERCOVER FINES	5
FEATURE ARTICLE	2
POSITIONS VACANT	3
FUNNY STORY	4
JOHNSONDIVERSEY TECHNICAL FILES	6



UNION GRAB FOR MEMBERSHIP

In what is increasingly being seen as a desperate grab for membership, our friends at the ALHMWU are attacking sites where they know there are a large number of employees, most, if not all, of whom are not Union Members.

We recently had to deal with a situation where our client, a decent and honest operator, had been forced by some of our crazy competitors, to reduce the price on a long held contract to a level where his only hope of retaining the job was to subcontract the work. In trying to do the right thing, all staff were given the option of becoming subbies, given time to think the matter over and all signed up, took out insurances etc and got on with the job. Three months later in rides a new white knight on his horse called "earnest endeavor" and tells the staff their contracts have expired, they are being underpaid and taken a lend of.

So we meet and explain our side of the story to the Union and staff representatives, who have by now joined the Union on the promise of more big dollars. The Union only wants "What they are legally entitled to" and stopped the demands for things they could not possibly get.

We met with our clients head and explained the problem. Answer—no more money, we will go to one of the contractors quoting lower prices.

Back to the Union and members. We offered an increase in weekend rates subject to a reduction in staffing hours on weekdays. The Union and members withdrew the claim.

Outcome—People who had been old friends for years no longer speak due to the interference of a officious Organiser who didn't understand.

In another case they are hitting one company up because they have a grievance with the owner who the Union considers treats all cleaners as second class citizens.

Demands for toilet allowances to be paid to any cleaner who walks into a toilet block. Demand for Rubbish Allowance when they only spend a quarter of their time doing rubbish. Neither of these demands can be justified in terms of the Award but are being used to justify a dispute to put pressure on the owner of the property.

The contractor, well he has a few members and is battling like all of us to stay above water, but the Union doesn't care. Another new Organiser, who doesn't even know his Award is making promises to get extra money to increase his membership tally.

When the matters of organisers not knowing the Award was raised at a senior level the answer was "Everybody has to learn". Maybe, but not at the expense of our contractor clients thank you.

By the way, I also suggested to the Union that it may be good sense for them to work with employers to bring about a minimum payment for subcontractors for inclusion in the Award. No way was the reply—there is already a clause in the award to deal with illegal subcontracting, they said.

A sensible answer to the current dilemma is to go along the path of the transport industry and introduce a rate which is sensible and acceptable and the Union could obtain membership growth through a new class of sub-contractor members. Far too sensible methinks.

**CLIENT MEMBERSHIP
NUMBERS NOW 65**

WE KEEP ON GROWING

**WELCOME TO ALL OUR NEW
CLIENT MEMBERS—YOU
WILL SOON BE A PART OF
THE LARGEST EMPLOYER
ORGANISATION FOR
CLEANERS IN THE STATE**

The Basics of Clean

Shiny floors are important, but it's time to move beyond lip service about why we clean—for asset preservation, productivity and public health

By Stacie Whitacre (Reprinted from the July Edition of CleanLink)

Why do we clean?

That's a simple question, without a simple answer. Ask that question of a small child, and he might say, "so things aren't dirty." A Fortune 500 CEO might answer, "so the headquarters are attractive to the stockholders." A building service contractor might make a crack about making money. The mother of an asthmatic child will answer quite differently, as will a cost-conscious facility manager. Ask some forward-thinking cleaning experts why we clean, and you won't get a pat response.

Cleaning is done for myriad reasons, says Dr. Michael Berry, a researcher and teacher of environmental science and management at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. According to Berry, proper cleaning:

- Directly contributes to security, comfort and productivity
- Allows for the reuse of space and materials
- Maintains the value of property and reduces the rate of depreciation
- Creates a unique psychology that enhances quality of life
- Encourages topophilia (love of place)
- Elevates a sense of well-being, which is the essence of good health
- Sends caring messages and images
- Promotes human dignity
- Accents aesthetics
- Manages waste and hazards and contributes to environmental protection
- Ensures sanitation by reducing adverse exposure levels.

"Historically, I think our industry has forgotten that the basic reason we clean isn't to have shiny floors—it's for public health, to create a healthy environment and to protect the building itself," adds Stephen Ashkin, president of The Ashkin Group, Bloomington, Ind. But, some members of the cleaning industry are beginning to understand, and are moving beyond simply cleaning for appearance. However, a "cleaning for health" or "green cleaning" program can't just be a marketing slogan—it needs to be a philosophy, fully ingrained within a cleaning operation, in order for it to succeed. The philosophy must be evident not only in brochures but in training, customer communication and purchasing practices as well.

WORKING DEFINITIONS

For meaningful environmental-management and cleaning guidance to be presented to consumers, the process of cleaning must be defined, and understood, especially in relation to reduction of exposure to unwanted things," Berry explains. "This is important so that systems designed or claiming to clean can be evaluated in terms of their effectiveness in achieving a sanitary state." First, "cleaning" itself must be defined. Also, "health" needs to be defined in order for BSCs to be able to quantify their goals. "We need to know what health is all about," says Berry. "Health is much more than the absence of disease. Most importantly, health is an elevated condition or sense of 'well-being'. This is what cleaning provides."

Indoor and outdoor environmental protection often get wrapped up in the label of "green cleaning", but they're important to health as well and should be defined in broader terms, Ashkin says. "Green cleaning' is cleaning to protect health without harming the environment," he says. "I remind people we're a huge industry, with lots of environmental impact. We have an opportunity to reverse that impact through purchasing [environmentally preferable products]."

ROAD BLOCKS TO HEALTHY CLEANING

A few problems stand between the philosophy and its overall implementation. One of them, says Larry Shideler, CEO of Pro-Team Inc. in Boise, Idaho, is customer indifference and ignorance. Most people are concerned with cost," Shideler explains. In addition, in a leased building, owners are more concerned with appearance, because they want an attractive facility to present to their tenants, Shideler says. On the other hand, in an owner-occupied building, health is more of a concern, because that owner has a direct financial stake in the health of his or her employees. Cost aside, customers might be indifferent to healthy cleaning because they don't see janitors at work very often, and they might not know just what chemicals and procedures workers use.

"I was a contractor for years, and I was concerned more about the workers than the building," Shideler says. "They were working all the time with toxic chemicals."

Since BSCs often work at night, the building managers don't seem or smell the chemicals in the air; by the time they come to work in the morning, everything has dissipated, Shideler says.

In response to seeing workers struggling with harsh chemicals and heavy vacuums, Shideler designed a line of backpack vacuums, and has trademarked "Cleaning For Health" for use in his company.

Continued from Page 2

Ashkin cites an example of customer ignorance—he once consulted on a ‘sick’ building. It was a state building, facing lawsuits because people were getting ill.

“They brought me in as a cleaning expert,” Ashkin recalls. “We found that the building was just dirty. The manager was surprised—he thought he was getting more than he paid for from his contractor!”

The problem wasn’t the BSC—it was that the contract didn’t provide for enough work to actually keep the building clean. But, in spite of these challenges, Berry believes many in the cleaning industry are on the right track.

“In the past 20 years, we have all seen some profound changes in the way cleaning business is conducted,” says Berry. BSCs and other cleaners are very aware of the indoor environment, and have been presenting themselves as environmental-management experts.

“In recent years, the successful end of the industry has blossomed in the practice of sound environmental management,” Berry continues. “The industry has been instrumental in validating the principles and strategies of environmental management indoors. It has defined itself through standards and technologies that highlight basic environmental-management principles such as maximum extraction, minimum chemical and particle residue, effective ventilation and responsible waste disposal.”

When these principles are applied to cleaning programs, we can see and measure dramatic improvements in environmental quality, especially indoor air—and these are things that can be quantified to demonstrate value, Berry says.

“When we see a 50 percent improvement in the air quality in an otherwise sanitary, non-problem building, because it is cleaned based on environmental-management principles, we see value in what the industry has to offer,” he says.

Another point that makes healthy and environmentally friendly cleaning more common now than in years past is the rapidly changing array of products available.

“Technology in the cleaning industry has changed enormously,” Ashkin says. “Five or 10 years ago, I might have said that less-toxic products equal more elbow grease at a higher cost. But the technology has improved significantly. There are environmentally preferable products in most categories that are as effective [as traditional products], but reduce health risks.”

Also, machinery has improved to help protect both janitors and building occupants, Shideler says. Ergonomic vacuums, better filters and more concentrated sprayers all help reduce worker strain and exposure to contaminants.

IMPLEMENTING A PROGRAM

In order for a company to have a successful cleaning-for-health approach, it must do three things, says Berry. “First and foremost, the business must recognize and convince itself that there is value and business opportunity to be found in products and services that enhance environmental quality,” he says. “Second, the business must understand completely how and what products and services do for the environment and the quality of life.”

Finally, the business must be able to practice what it preaches by speaking the language of environmental management convincingly, generating a demand for the cleaning service, and establishing solid business relationships based on quality performance, respect and confidence.

That final step is key, Ashkin agrees. “If you decide to develop a cleaning-for-health program, realize it’s more than a marketing campaign,” Ashkin advises. “Learn the stuff, walk the talk. You can’t just make a brochure with flowers and children on it—it’s not enough. Think through the whole program, and don’t embarrass yourself—don’t let your competitor take potshots at you. Evaluate your paper goods, vacuums and chemicals.”

However, not all customers will be interested in buying into a health agenda, especially if that agenda isn’t part of the lowest bid, Ashkin warns. “We first need to recognize that we’re in a competitive market,” says Ashkin. If people aren’t interested, there’s little we can do, he adds.

“Be realistic,” Shideler says. “People need to get educated, but that’ll come slowly, and it won’t change overnight.”

Whether a BSC or customer wants to address the health issue now, sanitation and environmental-risk management will remain high on the list of human concerns, especially in sensitive environments like schools, hospitals, nursing and retirement homes, Berry says.

“Given the environmental concerns in the marketplace today, there is unlimited opportunity for individual businesses that perform well,” he says. “Many forward-thinking cleaning businesses recognize this and are doing exactly what they should be doing.”

Contractors who know why we clean—for health, for environment and for safety as well as for aesthetics—stand to come out ahead as the public becomes more educated. Customers who understand the value of cleaning will seek out these savvy BSCs, ensuring that cleaning will get the respect it’s due, and a contract that allows a facility to be cleaned as it should.

For Sale

If you have something for sale or want to buy some good quality second hand equipment, this is the place. After all it will cost you nothing.

Hako Jonas Ride On Sweeper
Gazda Gas Buffer Hako 32B Scrubber
All in good condition. Call John on 9712 1500 for prices etc.

POSITIONS VACANT

We have available some very good Site Managers, Supervisors and other Operations staff. We also have trained cleaning staff who are actively looking for work.
No charge for supplying cleaning staff. Just call the office on 97121566 or 97121500.

We are on the web:

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OUR

MISSION STATEMENT

Our aim is to provide a range of services specifically designed to meet the needs and aspirations of the small to medium sized companies operating in the Property Services Industry. We know and understand just how difficult it is to operate in such a competitive market and we look forward to supplying services which will assist you in achieving your aims and in doing that part of your job which you do best.

John Cavers is available to assist with any Industrial problem from Unfair Dismissal to award interpretation and you can get him at the office or on 0417 251200. John Laws can help with Tenders, Costing, Documentation, QA, OHS & IM, Cleaning Software etc. Get him on 0418225180 to come and help.

WEBSITES

As you know by now there are a number of websites which can be of use. How many of you have thought to obtain your MSDS Sheets over the Web? Very simple and immediate. Try these:

www.johnsondiversey.com.au/msds www.agar.com.au
www.cleantec.com.au www.research-products.com.au www.truebluechemicals.com.au www.whiteley.com.au

HELPFUL WEBSITES

www.tenders.nsw.gov.au
www.market.fairfax.com.au/tenders/smh.html



CUSTOMER SERVICE:

This has got to be one of the funniest I've heard of in a long time. Maybe this guy should have been promoted, not fired. This is a true story from the WordPerfect Help line which was transcribed from a recording monitoring the customer care department.

Needless to say, the Help Desk employee was fired, however, he is currently suing the WordPerfect organization for "Termination without Cause".

"Rich Hall computer assistance; may I help you?"

"Yes, well, I'm having trouble with WordPerfect." "What sort of trouble?" "Well, I was just typing along, and all of a sudden the words went away." "Went away?" "They disappeared." "Hmmm. So what does your screen look like now?" "Nothing." "Nothing?" "It's a blank; it won't accept anything when I type." "Are you still in WordPerfect, or did you get out?" "How do I tell?" "Can you see the C: prompt on the screen?" "What's a sea-prompt?" "Never mind, can you move your cursor around the screen?" "There isn't any cursor: I told you, it won't accept anything I type." "Does your monitor have a power indicator?"

"What's a monitor?" "It's the thing with the screen on it that looks like a TV. Does it have a little light that tells you when it's on?"

"I don't know." "Well, then look on the back of the monitor and find where the power cord goes into it. Can you see that?" "Yes, I think so." "Great. Follow the cord to the plug, and tell me if it's plugged into the back of it, not just one?" "No." "Well, there are. I need you to look back there again and find the other cable." "Okay, here it is." "Follow it for me, and tell me if it's plugged securely into the back of your computer." "I can't reach." "Uh huh. Well, can you see if it is?" "No." "Even if you maybe put your knee on something and lean way over?"

"Oh, it's not because I don't have the right angle it's because it's dark." "Dark?" "Yes, the office light is off, and the only light I have is coming in from the window." "Well, turn on the office light then." "I can't." "No? Why not?"

"Because there's a power failure."

"A power.....a power failure?.....Aha, Okay, we've got it licked now. Do you still have the boxes and manuals and packing stuff your computer came in?" "Well, yes, I keep them in the closet." "Good. Go get them, and unplug your system and pack it up just like it was when you got it. Then take it back to the store you bought it from."

"Really? Is it that bad?" "Yes, I'm afraid it is." "Well, all right then, I suppose. What do I tell them?" "Tell them you're too f.....g stupid to own a computer."

Cavers Corner

Many companies make the fatal mistake of accruing employee entitlements in hours instead of days or weeks.

Our Award does not mention hours and nor do the Statutory Acts of Parliament. This lack of understanding can be very costly.

Example 1:

Bill Smith commences work as a Part Time employee, Monday to Friday, 3 hours daily, 15 hours weekly on 1 January 2003. Quite regular OK?

On October 2003 a Full Time Afternoon Shift position becomes available, which Bill accepts. However, in November 2003, Bill contracts the flu and is off work (with a Medical certificate) for 5 days. He must be paid 5 days Sick Pay at the current rate so get \$564.20 and the employer still has to find a replacement for the week and pay him/her.

Furthermore, Bill decides in February 2004 to take his four weeks holiday entitlement. He must be paid 4 x \$564.20 plus 17.55 loading. Remember. He has only been full time since October last but is still entitled to the full four weeks leave at his current rate.

In April 2004 Bill sprains his ankle playing soccer with his kids and is off work for two weeks. No Workers' Compensation here but another 2 weeks at full sick pay, again, even though he has only been full time since last October.

Example 2:

Tom Jones (Nothing original in these names!!) has been working for the company for over 5 years as a Part Time Cleaner on 15 HPW. His employer offers him a Full Time position on early Morning Shift and Tom accepts.

As a good hard working loyal employee Tom has accrued 30 days of Sick Leave entitlements (remember the entitlement is 10 days per year after the first year and all Sick Leave untaken accrues). After working for six months in the new position Tom, unfortunately, suffers a heart attack and is off work on full pay of \$564.20 per week for six weeks. At the end of this period his doctor supplied a certificate indicating he would no longer be able to work in cleaning and had to resign. The employer was up for Long Service and Holiday Pay with loading.

COMMENTS:

Never promote Part Time staff to Full Time without checking entitlements. If the employee has worked for less than five years make the person take accrued holiday time prior to commencing the new job.

If worked more than five years have the person resign, pay out all accruals and then reemploy three weeks later. This is the way to ensure you are not stuck with continuity of Employment.

You know that this could also work in reverse. In all my time in the cleaning industry I don't know anybody working Full Time for a company who has accepted a Part Time position with the same company.

WORKCOVER FINES BIG BOY

Boral Bricks Pty Ltd has been fined \$130,000 by the NSW Industrial Relations Commission sitting in court session following the death of a worker and injury to three others who tried to rescue him from its Jinderah brick kiln.

Boral pleaded guilty to three charges brought by WorkCover under Section s15(1) and Section s16(1) of the OHS Act 1983 for failing to ensure the health, safety and welfare of the worker who died, three workers who were injured, and another work who was placed at risk.

A WorkCover investigation showed that the company had failed to provide appropriate safety measures and training for the rescue of personnel and failed to comply with requirements for working in confined spaces.

The worker died on 10 January 2000 after he was trapped between two brick carts in a 2.5 metre high pre-heating tunnel at the kiln. Unsuccessful attempts to free the man in the hot and gas-laden air of the tunnel resulted in injuries to three other workers.

In fining Boral \$43,333 on each of the three charges, Justice Staunton said the company had taken an attitude of quiescent complacency towards occupational health and safety at the kiln since acquiring the property in 1999.

WorkCover Chief Executive Officer Jon Blackwell commented: This case is a tragic reminder for all employers of the possible consequences of not identifying and controlling risks in the workplace.

"A WorkCover investigation showed that the company had failed to provide appropriate safety measures and training for the rescue of personnel....."

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

All jokes aside, the inspectors are out and about. They have publicly stated they intend to crack down on Cleaning Contractors and other with a high Workers' Compensation history. While it's not your fault, the fact is our industry has a poor Workers' Compensation record and **SOMETHING HAS TO BE DONE.**

Ring or write and we can help with your OHS Manual. Do it today please. The fact that you will save more than the cost of the Manual in reduced WorkCover premiums should have no bearing on your attitude but it does help. Just for once let's all be ahead of the Bureaucracy.



Technical Files

Issue 1

Maintaining Hard Floors

JohnsonDiversey have overcome the need for separate polishes for high speed cord electric and UHS polishers and now have one product that has proven itself in the hardest marketplace, Supermarkets, which can be laid on almost all hard floor surfaces with fantastic hard wearing and high shine results.

The product is called 'PREMIA' and now that it is generally available it's time to revise our ideas and attitudes to hard floor maintenance.

According to Michael LeGoff, of the company, the process of floor treatment and maintenance which now should be followed is:

TERRAZZO & GRANITE TYPE SURFACES Application:

1. Strip old floor finish using JohnsonDiversey **PRONTO** Stripper. If the old polish is particularly difficult to remove then you should use the boosted stripper—**STRIP PLUS** which is more aggressive on old water based finishes.
2. Neutralise the floor by washing with a neutral detergent at least twice and preferably utilising an automatic scrubbing machine. Test floor after dry to ensure the Ph level is neutral. If not, carry out the neutralising process again until the floor is correctly neutralised.
3. Apply two base coats of **TERRASEAL** and allow up to 40 minutes drying time between coats.
4. Apply at least three coats of **PREMIA**, again allowing up to 40 minutes drying time between each coat.
5. Do not burnish the floor until at least 24 hours have elapsed.

Maintenance:

This finish does not necessarily require daily burnishing to maintain its appearance. In fact the surface may only require several times weekly burnishing to maintain the shine if washed with **REVIVE** prior to burnishing:

1. Dust mop or sweep to remove all dust and dirt.
2. Clean floor with a JD cleaner diluted in cold water according to label directions.
3. Maintain the gloss by periodic burnishing using a pad or equivalent brush. It may be necessary to recoat periodically in heavy traffic areas to ensure there is sufficient polish on the floor to withstand wear.
4. **PREMIA** can also be maintained with **REVIVE** diluted according to directions. When dry burnish as normal. Spray buffing unnecessary even with a slow speed machine.

Before Recoating:

1. Dust mop or sweep to remove all dust and dirt.
2. Deep scrub floor (auto scrub twice) using a Blue pad and JD cleaner diluted in cold water according to label instructions.
3. When dry, apply 1-3 coats of **PREMIA** using a clean applicator or polish mop. Keep 10-20cm from edge on second and subsequent coats.
4. Allow each coat to dry for 30-40 minutes before applying the next coat.
5. Burnish floor 24 hours after laying the top coat.

USING SINGLE STEP CLEANER/ MAINTAINERS

Cleaner/maintainers have been developed to extend the life of a given floor coating and to enhance the appearance of water based floor finishes.

The JohnsonDiversey product **REVIVE** is suitable for both UHS and slow speed applications. It can be applied by mop and bucket or by auto scrubbers. It can even be wet burnished with slow speed equipment. It is designed to dry quickly and builds gloss by lubricating the film while burnishing.

It gives maximum results if used every time the floor is cleaned.

Application:

1. Dust mop or sweep to remove all dirt and debris.
2. Dilute in cold water (15ml per litre of water in bucket 1:60, 30ml per litre for auto scrubber 1:30). Apply liberally to floor but do not leave excessive wet patches. Do not mop off.
3. Allow floor to dry completely.
4. For best appearance burnish floor with the correct pad or brush.

VINYL & COMPOSITE TILES

Porous internal floor surfaces, such as these, require a slightly different process, in that the choice of base coat or sealer is far more important to ensure the porous finish is correctly sealed.

FORTIFY is a JD product which has been designed to enhance the appearance of worn tiles by creating a smoother surface for an improved finish, durability, gloss and adhesion.

When used with **PREMIA** in a 2 sealer, 3 finish coat programme the result is much better than just a straight 5 coat sealer programme.

Application:

1. Strip old coatings using a JD stripper according to label instructions.

2. Apply one coat of **FORTIFY** using a clean polish mop or applicator.
3. Allow coats to dry 20-30 minutes depending on drying conditions.
4. Apply a further coat of **FORTIFY** using the same clean mop or applicator.
5. Apply 3 coats, waiting 30-40 minutes between each coat of **PREMIA** to gain the full benefit of this programme.

Maintenance:

1. Dust mop or sweep to remove all dust and dirt.
2. Clean floor with JD cleaner diluted in cold water according to label directions.
3. Maintain the finish gloss using periodic recoating, spray buffing, or burnishing, according to label directions.
4. Wash clean and dry all equipment before storing.
5. To avoid contamination never put unused product back into containers. It's much safer to dispose of the excess in a safe manner.

WHAT'S NEW?, YOU SAY!

I know it's the same old boring procedure. What's new is that a cleaning company is now able to purchase the same product for use in high traffic or low traffic areas. Furthermore the contractor is able to standardize his purchasing because the one product can be used in almost all situations. Many of us have some high speed equipment and lots of slower speed stuff.

It's good to know that we can take a container of polish to any site and it will be as effective there as it has been elsewhere despite the type of equipment being used for cleaning and burnishing (in the higher speed range of 700 to 2500+rpm).

With the emphasis on OHS & IM these days, every rationalization of procedures and products is a step in the right direction. Training time is reduced, the need for wide product knowledge is reduced and the flow on effect is simply that there will be less mistakes and improved productivity in the long run.

This article accepts the information provided by JohnsonDiversey as an acceptable and efficient way of improving productivity and recommends that you give serious consideration to standardising your product mix.

For further information contact Michael LeGoff on 0411 173512 and I thank him for his assistance in the production of this article.

Single page charts and copies of this document will be available on request.