

Secrets of America's No. 1 Green City

by Virginia Petru

What does it take to be America's Greenest City? Dave Lane, facility maintenance supervisor for the City of Eugene's Facilities Division in Oregon, can provide some insight.

Eugene was recently named the No. 1 Green City by The Green Guide — a premier consumer resource for green living.

“Whether we pursue LEED certification for a building or not, we look to LEED guidelines for the design and construction of new facilities and the maintenance of existing facilities,” says Lane.

“Everything we do in the maintenance of a facility, from the day to day routines to long range planning, is done with a focus on the impact our decisions have on the environment. Although these environmental changes saved us money, we initiated them because it was the right thing to do.”

Starting with Restrooms

Restrooms can be a significant maintenance challenge, but Eugene saw them as a starting point in green transformation.

First, they replaced folded towels with motion towel dispensers at the Eugene Airport.

“The airport is notorious for bursts of heavy use that require frequent restocking,” explains Lane. “With the motion dispensers, maintenance staff saw paper consumption drop by 40 percent.”

The city's trial of waterless urinals showed an annual savings of 40,000 gallons of water per urinal, while replacing traditional soap dispensers with foam soap dispensers cut the frequency of refills by five times.

Further, replacing disposable gloves with re-usable gloves keeps approximately 80,000 rubber gloves out of the landfill each year.



Eugene, OR — America's No. 1 Green City — relies upon H₂Orange₂ to obtain LEED credits for green cleaning.

Cleaners = Easy LEED Credits

Since three of the five LEED-EB credit categories pertain to green cleaning products and practices, Eugene pays particular attention to the cleaning products that are used in city facilities.

For years, the city had been using environmental products with varied results.

Then, about two years ago, they were introduced to H₂Orange₂® Concentrate 117 Cleaner-Sanitizer-Virucide-HBV.

“It was rare to find anything new that really worked,” recalls Lane. “But what we saw with H₂Orange₂ was unprecedented. We used it in the city's parking structure restrooms, which get a lot of use and are filthy every morning. H₂Orange₂ did a great job on everything, including the tile, grout, concrete, fixtures, partitions, and stainless surfaces.”

It cleaned so well that for several days the crew had to make a second pass on the floors to clean all the matter that H₂Orange₂ lifted up out of the grout and concrete.

Performance in the shower rooms was just as impressive.

“Since H₂Orange₂ is EPA registered as a sanitizer, we can clean and sanitize with one product,” adds Lane.

The Scent of Green

“Other chemicals we've used have caused a variety of health issues, from rashes to respiratory problems,” points out Lane. “We've been using H₂Orange₂ diluted into either light-duty or heavy-duty strength for about two years, and we've had no health problems. Plus, instead of the usual complaints we used to get about chemical odors, we've had compliments on the scent from employees and the public.”

By following the lead of “Green Eugene,” any facility maintenance department, whether LEED-EB-bound or not, can spruce up its operations, save money, maximize labor, and create a healthier environment.

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