



## Suggested Environmental Considerations for Environmental Services, Laundry & Linen, and Patient Transport Services

The following questions are suggested for consideration in services contracts for environmental services, laundry and linen services and patient transport services. If you have any questions, feel free to contact Beth Eckl, [beckl@practicegreenhealth.org](mailto:beckl@practicegreenhealth.org).

	Question	Preferred Answer	Rationale	Other Notes
<b>Janitorial Cleaners</b>				
1	Is your organization certified as an Institutional Janitorial Service provider by an independent third party meeting or exceeding Green Seal's GS-42 standards by offering "green" cleaning services that protect human health and the environment? (Yes/No)	Yes	There are dozens of services who are certified and meet stringent standards for Green Seal GS-42. For a list, see <a href="http://www.greenseal.org/FindGreenSealProductsandServices/CleaningServices.aspx">http://www.greenseal.org/FindGreenSealProductsandServices/CleaningServices.aspx</a>	
If no to Question #1, please respond to the remaining questions. If yes, skip to Question #12.				
2	Have you provided other clients with "green" cleaning services? (Yes/No) If yes, provide contact information	Yes	Prefer services that have experience using green cleaning products.	
3	Has your company been compliant (with no fines or violations) with local, national or international environmental laws or regulations over the past 12 months? (Yes/No)	Yes	Prefer services that are free of fines or violations.	
4	Can you provide a Green Cleaning Plan specific to each building that defines cleaning procedures, schedules, and maintenance? (Yes/No)	Yes		
5	Can you provide a detailed description of how green cleaning operations will address special areas, such as high traffic areas, dining and food preparation areas, laboratories, and entryways? (Yes/No)	Yes		

6	Can you provide a detailed description of how green cleaning operations will address storage and use of chemicals within the facility including proper ventilations, dilution control and adequate security and management of the area? (Yes/No)	Yes		
7	Can you provide detailed requirements addressing Integrated Pest Management, if applicable? (Yes/No/NA)	Yes		
8	Can you provide detailed reporting how your company will address vulnerable populations such as children, asthmatics and pregnant women? (Yes/No)	Yes		
9	Can you provide cleaning products in at least the following categories that meet either Green Seal or EcoLogo/UL Environment standards for cleaners? (Yes/No) 1. General Purpose Cleaners 2. Bathroom Cleaners 3. Glass Cleaners 4. Carpet Cleaners 5. Floor Cleaners 6. Floor Care: Finishes and Strippers 7. Hand Cleaners and Hand Soaps	Yes		Green Seal's standards include: Industrial and Institutional Cleaners (GS-37), Industrial and Institutional Floor Care Products (GS-40), and Industrial and Institutional Hand Cleaners (GS-41), <a href="http://www.greenseal.org/FindGreenSealProductsAndServices.aspx">http://www.greenseal.org/FindGreenSealProductsAndServices.aspx</a> . EcoLogo certified products can be found at <a href="http://www.ecologo.org/en/seeourcriteria/category.asp?category_id=21">http://www.ecologo.org/en/seeourcriteria/category.asp?category_id=21</a> .
10	Can you provide products with no added fragrances ("unscented" products may contain masked fragrances) to eliminate possible exposure to chemicals that trigger asthma in sensitive populations and exposure to phthalates? (Yes/No)	Yes		
11	Can you provide janitorial equipment that is either approved by the Carpet and Rug Institute (CRI) Green Label Program or utilizes HEPA filtration? (Yes/No)	Yes		

Laundry/Linens				
12	Do you use Ozone technology instead of chlorine bleach? (Yes/No)	Yes	Chlorine bleach creates dioxin in it's manufacture. Dioxin is one of the most toxic chemicals, according to the EPA. Alternatives, such as ozone technology, are readily available.	
13	Do you use laundry chemicals which are effective at low temperatures? (Yes/No)	Yes	The use of low or cooler water temperatures helps lower energy costs and greenhouse gas emissions. Products are available	
14	Does your company use Energy Star rated equipment? (Yes/No) If yes, what percentage of washers and dryers used are Energy Star rated?	Yes/highest %	EPA's Energy Star program rates and certifies products that use less energy than comparable products. Energy Star rated equipment use less energy than comparable products.	
15	Do you use alternative energy sources, such as solar power, for hot water heating? (Yes/No) If yes, what percentage of the total energy consumed is from alternatives (excludes coal, natural gas, nuclear).	Yes/%	Alternative energy sources reduce reliance on fossil fuels that contribute to greenhouse gas emissions. Health care is one of the largest users of energy of any sector so has a significant impact on greenhouse gas emissions. Hospitals seek products and services that support reducing their energy use and overall costs of providing quality care.	
16	Do you use fuel efficient transportation for pickup and delivery of laundry items or are you an EPA SmartWay Partner? (Yes/No)	Yes	Fuel efficient transportation (including hybrids and electric vehicles) means vehicles that exceed 27 miles/gallon for cars and 24 miles/gal for light trucks as defined by the US Federal government and may increase. Commercial fleets that are EPA SmartWay partners demonstrate their commitment to fuel efficiency.	
17	Do you use laundry chemicals which are free of phosphates? (Yes/No)	Yes	Too many phosphates in water can lead to eutrophication which can be detrimental to fish and plant life.[1]	<a href="http://water.epa.gov/type/rsl/monitoring/vms56.cfm">http://water.epa.gov/type/rsl/monitoring/vms56.cfm</a>

18	Are your laundry products free of alky phenol ethoxylates (APEOs) or their derivatives, including nonylphenol (NP) and nonylphenol ethoxylates (NPEs)? (Yes/No)	Yes	APEOs are a broad class of nonionic surfactants, including NPEs (nonylphenol ethoxylates) and nonylphenol (NP). APEO's are associated with hormone disruption in water bodies where they are released after sewage treatment. NP is persistent in the aquatic environment, moderately bioaccumulative, and extremely toxic to aquatic organisms. NP has also been shown to exhibit estrogenic properties in <i>in vitro</i> and <i>in vivo</i> assays. NP's main use is in the manufacture of NPEs. NPEs are nonionic surfactants that are used in a wide variety of industrial applications and consumer products. Many of these, such as laundry detergents, are "down-the-drain" applications. NPEs, though less toxic and persistent than NP, are also highly toxic to aquatic organisms, and, in the environment, degrade into NP.	<a href="#">Textile Rental Services Association of America (TRSA) agreed to expedite a phase-out of NPEs in industrial laundry detergents. The phase out, which has already begun, is being coordinated with EPA's DfE Safer Detergents Stewardship Initiative (SDSI) program and would end the use of NPEs in industrial laundry detergents by 2013 for liquid detergents and 2014 for powder detergents. EPA is considering both voluntary and regulatory action on NP and NPEs.</a>
----	---	-----	---	--

**Patient Transport Services**

19	Does your company use fuel efficient vehicles for patient transport? (Yes/No)	Yes	Fuel efficient transportation (including hybrids and electric vehicles) means vehicles that exceed 27 miles/gallon for cars and 24 miles/gal for light trucks as defined by the US Federal government and may increase. Commercial fleets that are EPA SmartWay partners demonstrate their commitment to fuel efficiency	
----	---	-----	--	--

<sup>[1]</sup> Brice A, *Is Phasing Out of Phosphates the Answer for the Detergent Sector?*, <http://www.icis.com/Articles/2008/06/23/9133127/is-phasing-out-phosphates-the-answer-for-detergents-sector.html>, June 2008

Practice Greenhealth © 2014

*Practice Greenhealth thanks its EPP Supporters for their contributions to the creation of this resource.*

