

# POLICY

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Green and Healthy Schools Cleaning Policy

## **7423 Specification and Use of Environmentally Preferable (“Green”) Cleaning Products**

The Readington Township Board of Education, recognizing the importance of the safety and health of the district’s students, teachers and staff, does hereby adopt the following policy regarding products used to clean and maintain school facilities within the district.

### Background and Intent

Many chemicals commonly found in cleaning products used to clean and maintain schools pose significant and unnecessary health risks for children as well as teachers and staff. Exposure to some of these chemicals has been associated with an increased incidence of asthma, allergies, certain types of cancer, learning and behavioral disorders, endocrine disruption, chemical sensitivity, and kidney or liver damage. In addition to these potential health impacts, certain cleaning chemicals can negatively impact air and water quality or may be acutely toxic to marine life. The Board believes it is not necessary to jeopardize the health and safety of our students, teachers and staff, or to pollute our environment, when many less toxic or non-toxic alternatives are available. Therefore the intent of this policy is to reduce student, teacher and staff exposure to these chemicals and reduce environmental pollution by stipulating procurement, implementation and evaluation policies for “green” cleaning products which ensure the highest levels of safety, efficacy and economy.

### Classification of Products

The Facilities Manager is hereby directed to classify cleaning products specified for purchase and use in district school facilities into one of the three following categories:

1. Type I products are those which are used daily for routine cleaning in classrooms, hallways and cafeterias, including all-purpose cleaners, cleaning pastes, window and mirror cleaners and dustmop treatments.
2. Type II products are those which are used to sanitize or disinfect in bathrooms, gymnasiums, nurses’ offices, kitchens, etc.



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3. Type III products are those which are used for floor stripping and finishing, metal polishing, graffiti removal, degreasing and heavy duty, restorative carpet cleaning.

### Specifications:

1. Products classified as all-purpose cleaners (Type I) shall meet or exceed the following specifications, as warranted in writing by manufacturers and vendors:

- Products have no or low VOC content (less than 1 %)
- Products are non-reactive, non-caustic and non-corrosive (preferably with a pH of 4.0 to 9.0)
- Products are not delivered in aerosol cans with petrochemical propellants
- Products do not contain known, probable or possible carcinogens, mutagens or teratogens as designated by federal law
- Products do not contain known or suspected endocrine modifiers, alkyl phenyl ethoxylates (APEs), dibutyl phthalate, diethyl phthalate or ingredients that are toxic to the liver or kidneys in environmentally relevant doses
- Products do not contain added fragrances (non-functional fragrances)
- Products do not contain non-food-grade dyes
- Products do not contain disinfectant or antibacterial chemicals (e.g., triclosan)
- Products do not contain 2-butoxyethanol

2. Products classified as sanitizers and disinfectants (Type II) shall meet or exceed the following specifications, as warranted in writing by manufacturers and vendors:

- Products shall NOT be chlorine-based (e.g. sodium hypochlorite)
- Products shall NOT contain quaternary ammonium compounds (e.g. ammonium chloride)
- Products should not contain phenolics (e.g. o-phenyl-phenol)

3. Products used for heavy duty floor care (Type III) shall meet or exceed the following specifications, as warranted in writing by manufacturers and vendors:

- Products shall NOT contain styrene
- Products shall NOT contain “heavy metals” including zinc, chromium or nickel
- Products shall NOT contain petroleum solvents or 2-butoxyethanol.



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4. The Business Administrator may develop purchasing strategies that use products and equipment that meet the following standards:

- Green Seal's GS-37 environmental standard for industrial and institutional cleaners;
- EcoLogo's CCD-146 standard for Hard Surface Cleaners;
- Carpet and Rug Institute's Green Label Program for vacuum cleaners;
- US EPA's Comprehensive Procurement Guidelines for janitor paper products and plastic trash bags.

### Implementation Guidelines

1. Up to 90% of the dirt in schools is brought in on the soles of shoes. Walk-off mats (15 feet minimum) are part of an effective green cleaning program, and should be installed at all school entrances.

2. All classroom teachers shall be provided with approved Type I cleaning products for use when necessary, and shall be given instruction in their proper use.

3. No parent, teacher or staff member may bring into a school facility any consumer product which is intended to clean, deodorize, sanitize or disinfect.

4. Type II disinfectant products shall be used only for body fluid spills or in areas where there is a high potential for direct contact with body fluids or when a public health concern requires their use. These products contain registered pesticides and should never be used for general cleaning purposes or when children are present.

5. Type III floor stripping and finishing products shall only be used when facilities are not in use (vacation breaks) or over long weekends, when buildings can be properly ventilated before children, teachers and staff return. These products typically contain highly toxic, highly caustic and highly corrosive chemicals. Their high VOC and pH levels require them to be used with personal protection and extreme caution, even when following guidelines.

### Training

Custodians shall be trained in the hazards, use, proper dilution, safety, maintenance, and disposal of cleaning chemicals, dispensing equipment, and packaging. Custodians shall provide awareness training to school staff on the Green Cleaning policies on an annual basis.



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The school nurse shall be consulted regarding any special health concerns, such as student allergies in the development of the classroom and cafeteria schedules and cleaning practices.

The Facilities Supervisor shall ensure the safe handling, storage, and disposal of cleaning products and other hazardous chemicals.

### Effective Date and Notice

This policy shall take effect on January 1, 2016. The district shall undertake to inform all parents, teachers and staff of the contents of this policy and the reasons for its adoption. All custodial staff shall be informed of the policy and trained in the use of “green” cleaning products. The District shall inform all vendors of this policy in writing and it shall be referenced in all new contracts and service agreements. Existing stocks of non-complying products shall be disposed of as directed by the Director of Facilities.

Adopted:

