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UF's Custodial Staff Goes Green

By CleanLink Editorial Staff

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As seen in the Northwest Florida Daily News Feb. 12

The University of Florida's Building Services Department of the Physical Plant Division announced its commitment last month to green cleaning practices throughout the 900-plus buildings maintained by the department.

In a new training program, UF Building Services has implemented "greener" training programs for custodial supervisors and staff. These initiatives will reduce the amount of volatile organic compounds used in cleaning while also eliminating many of the indoor airborne particulates, which are known to create mild to severe respiratory issues and other health problems.

"The University of Florida is a staunch proponent of sustainable practices," said Derrick Bacon, Assistant Director of the Physical Plant Division at the University of Florida. "In the Building Services Department, we recognize that it's not only important to avoid using products that might negatively affect the environment, but to also educate our employees about the concept of sustainability. By understanding the larger picture, they can discuss and promote the program with our customers."

In order to educate staff and customers about sustainable practices, Bacon has worked with his local JohnsonDiversey sales representative and others to incorporate green cleaning and environmentally friendly initiatives in their training. The new training includes discussion on

minimizing energy consumption, recycling, waste reduction, ergonomics, the importance of proper maintenance of entryway matting and other sustainable practices.

The program provides employees with sustainable practices they can use at work and in their personal lives. "Sustainability isn't something that just happens at work," Bacon said.

The transition to green has been gradual, involving employee training, a green purchasing policy, testing of green products and equipment and developing an effective communications pro-gram to get the word out about green.

By working with the Office of Sustainability, the Building Services Department will continue to roll out additional initiatives to reduce the department's impact on the health of building inhabitants and the environment. They are currently in the initial phases of deploying a new recycling program on campus.

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