



Location:	GCA Services Group, a nationwide building services contractor based in Cleveland, OH
Application:	Training of employees and clients to educate on the benefits of green cleaning programs
Products:	Advance brand equipment
Purpose:	To educate and deliver green cleaning programs to commercial facilities, manufacturing operations, public and private schools and universities
Primary Choice Factors:	Implement green cleaning program to help facility qualify for LEED certification, reduce costs, attract tenants or retain employees, improve cleaning effectiveness and indoor air quality

National BSC says choice of floor-cleaning equipment vendor is critical for its green cleaning programs

Nationwide building services contractor, GCA Services Group, is an impassioned leader in promoting its Custom Green Program to its quality-conscious clients in 50 states and Puerto Rico. GCA's 22,000-plus employees deliver green cleaning programs to commercial facilities and manufacturing operations, as well as public and private schools and universities.

While continuous employee training and client communication are critical for successful green cleaning, GCA Services acknowledges that choosing the right brand of vacuums, scrubbers, burnishers and extractors has been a key to the success of their green cleaning programs. GCA Services selected Advance as their principal floor-cleaning equipment vendor and promotes the use of Advance equipment to its cleaning operators throughout the country.

Advance's Equipment and Philosophy Contribute to Green at GCA

"Advance equipment has been the centerpiece of GCA's implementation of green cleaning," says Jason Lee, national training manager for GCA Services Group. "It's been critical to have a vendor that is both environmentally aware and very knowledgeable about all the new equipment and cleaning standards — like CRI and LEED. A big part of our Custom Green Program success is due simply to having Advance's equipment in place."

For example, vacuum cleaners must be capable of capturing 96 percent of particulates of 0.3 microns in size to meet the requirements of the Carpet & Rug Institute's (CRI) Green Label Program. All of Advance's newest vacuums have been CRI-certified, from the comfortable BackVacuum™ XP to the CarpeTrieve™ 28 large-area vacuum. Carpet extractors such as the AquaPLUS® and the AquaRide® AXP™ are CRI-certified under the Seal of

Approval Program for deep-cleaning extractors. Advance extractors also offer **LIFT™** low-moisture-mode cleaning that minimizes water and detergent use and cuts carpet drying time to less than 30 minutes to help prevent mold.

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Client Reasons for Choosing Green Cleaning Vary

For many of GCA Services' clients, the incentive to implement a green cleaning program is to help their facility qualify for Leadership in Environmental Excellence (LEED) certification. The newest LEED Green Building Rating System standards require green cleaning as a prerequisite for certification—which means that cleaning programs must be designed to reduce human exposure to potentially hazardous chemical, biological and particle contaminants within buildings. Other

GCA clients institute green cleaning practices in order to reduce costs, attract tenants or retain employees, or simply to improve cleaning effectiveness and indoor air quality (IAQ).

"In our mission statement on green cleaning, GCA emphasizes both effectiveness and efficiency: cleaning with effective equipment while using the proper chemicals efficiently," Lee explains. "By taking this holistic approach, we choose our equipment and chemicals to virtually eliminate negative impacts on the indoor environment." The results are measurable. For example, one of GCA's clients, a large Southern university, found through an independent study that GCA's green cleaning processes resulted in a 100-times improvement in IAQ.

Training for Green Cleaning

Lee conducts GCA employee seminars all over the country—with a big emphasis on green cleaning processes and hands-on training. During these seminars, Lee uses Advance equipment almost exclusively to demonstrate green cleaning methods. He also conducts seminars with clients to educate them about the benefits of green cleaning. And at the end of every seminar, Lee asks: "Can you give me any reason why you wouldn't transition to a green cleaning program?" The answer is invariably "No."

While green cleaning means changes in equipment, chemicals and processes, Lee continually emphasizes that green cleaning is not a large "paradigm shift" for many companies. In most cases, the steps toward improving IAQ and protecting the health and safety of workers and clients are straightforward.

Greener Means More Frequent Cleaning

There may be economic benefits from implementing a green cleaning program, according to Lee, but the results vary from case to case. More important, he says that green cleaning forces clients to focus on daily cleaning instead of chemical-intensive restorative cleaning programs on a less frequent basis. "With a greater emphasis on daily maintenance, the facility will be cleaner, processes will be greener and money can often be saved in

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the long run, too. Frequent cleaning is especially important for carpets and hard floors," Lee says. "You can't wait for them to get really dirty, because that requires more chemicals and much more labor to properly restore them."

The principles that have made GCA Services Group successful include partnering with vendors such as Advance, continuous training of cleaning personnel and educating clients about the health, safety and economic benefits of green cleaning processes. "We hope that all of our clients will want to institute green cleaning programs," says Lee. "For those looking to institute them in the future, GCA already has the tools in place. In fact, we now like to think of ourselves as the 'Greenest Cleaners in America.'" With the continued support of vendors like Advance, they just might be.



Robert Shears, a GCA employee working at Oregon Health and Sciences University Center for Health and Healing uses the Advance AquaClean® carpet extractor. The facility is a Silver LEED building in Portland, Oregon.



Designed with standards such as LEED-EB, GS-42 and CRI in mind, the AquaClean® 18FLX, CarpeTrier™ 28, Adphibian™ and AquaRide® floor machines demonstrate Advance's commitment to green cleaning.



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