

Custodial/Maintenance Staff Newsletter



Spring, 2014

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Spring Holidays

April 11—Last Day of Spring Break
May 26—Memorial Day



Spring Ahead on
March 9 at 2:00
a.m.! Don't forget!

Dates to Note

April 7—11—Spring Break
May 23—Snow Make-Up Day—No school unless required due to snow closure.

Always Keep Your Cleaning Equipment in Good Shape!

A woman was flown to Galveston for treatment of burns after a work-related accident at Parkdale Mall.

The 39-year-old contract worker at Macy's was using a backpack type vacuum cleaner in the store about 11:30 a.m. when the cord shorted out, setting fire to her clothes, said Capt. [Brad Penisson](#) of the [Beaumont Fire Department](#).

She suffered second and third degree burns to her back.

Paramedics treated her injuries and gave her pain medicine before putting her on the helicopter, he said. She was "conscious and alert" but her condition couldn't immediately be confirmed.

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Correct Mopping Helps Avoid RMI's

Repetitive Motion Injuries (RMI's) are common in many jobs. As the name implies they occur due to a specific task being repeated again and again over a period of years. In the cleaning industry these may include carpal tunnel syndrome, tendonitis and bursitis. One of the biggest culprits causing RMI's is mopping floors. And when done incorrectly, these injuries can become even more detrimental.

The magazine *Cleaning and Maintenance Management* ran an article in the December, 2013 issue highlighting this problem. Some of the main factors in causing RMI's when mopping is the weight of the mops, the long handle and how the person using it is swinging the mop to clean the floor.

Since mopping is done on a regular basis either by mopping up spills or during a regular routine, the incidence of RMI's increases greatly! A great improvement in mop-

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Does It Matter How I Change My Vacuum Bag?

When it comes to changing vacuum bags, does it really matter how you do so? Really? According to studies and experts the answer is "yes". Once a vacuum bag has removed soil and other particulates from a carpet, all of the germs, bacteria and whatever else might be lurking in the fibers has been sucked into the vacuum bag. When removing the bag to discard it, allowing the dust to fly freely has just defeated the purpose of carefully removing and containing the particulates in the first place.

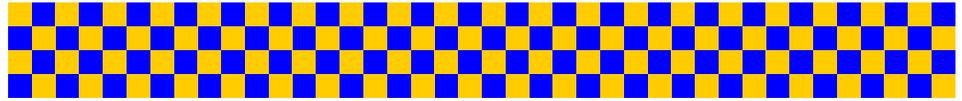
In a news release by the Tornado Industries company which has been engineering cleaning equipment for more than 85 years, the following steps were suggested when changing a vacuum bag.

- *Unplug the machine from the power source before proceeding.*
- *Wear gloves during the entire bag removal process.*
- *If the machine is a backpack or canister, disconnect the hose.*
- *Check whether the manufacturer has provided special removal and insertion instructions; for instance, on some machines, the assembly that holds the filter bag must be pulled up or out in order for the bag to be removed.*
- *As an added safety measure, place the bag in a small plastic liner and seal the opening; this helps prevent dust from being released during handling.*
- *If the vacuum cleaner has been used to vacuum up rodents or their nesting materials, double bag the filter bag using two plastic liners.*
- *Place the bag, now inside one or two sealed plastic liners, in a Dumpster or securely covered trash can that is emptied regularly.*

Good disposal practices of vacuum bags can help prevent sickness and the spread of pathogens and other debris. All the hard work of vacuuming up particulates will be contained and discarded appropriately.

For more details follow this [link](#).





Tips For Cleaning Dingy Grout

Industry experts offer up best practices for battling this common restroom challenge.

By: Phillip Lawless

Article taken from cmmonline.com

It is a physiological part of the human condition; we always need a restroom nearby. Thus, the rooms that many facility managers and contractors would rather forget can be found almost everywhere. They are in the finest of restaurants and in the greasiest of spoons. They are in state parks, on public beaches and even beside highways.

And regardless of the location, there is no overstating the importance of restroom cleaning. Due to the nature of their use, restrooms frequently house some of the most difficult cleaning challenges — from odor and disinfection to discoloration and contamination. One of the most troublesome restroom issues today is grout discoloration.

CMMOnline.com reached out a few experts and put together a trio of tips to help address this universal cleaning challenge.

Cleaning Grout Tip 1:

Bill McGarvey, director of training & sustainability for the Philip Rosenau Company and a Cleaning Management Institute certified trainer, said the first step is ascertaining the cause of grout discoloration. If soil can be seen creeping up a wall in the grout lines, managers need look no further than the nearest custodian's mop bucket.

Aside from troublesome mop buckets, managers should try to figure out what soil has discolored the grout and where it originates. Next, to remove existing discoloration, an appropriate cleaning agent should be used to loosen the soil with proper agitation from a brush or a pressure washer using 1,000 PSI or less. Once the soil has been loosened, recovery should be accomplished with a good-quality wet vacuum. "Trying to mop up the dirty solution is merely going to start the soiling process again," McGarvey revealed. Finally, once grout is properly cleaned — or better yet when grout is new — it should be sealed with an impregnating sealer. For heavily trafficked areas, the use of air movers and proper ventilation can help keep moisture, bacteria and contaminants from thriving in porous grout.

Cleaning Grout Tip 2:

Steve Schultz, a chemical engineer with Clorox who has 10 years of product development experience with cleaning products, stated that tough-to-clean urine stains and odors in restrooms can make an otherwise clean facility seem unappealing and dirty.

To properly address odors and discoloration, Schultz suggested the following:

- The effective and lasting solution to eliminating odors lies in breaking down uric acid crystals and removing the source of the odors rather than just masking them.
- Porous damp surfaces, such as grout, hold bacteria, which feed on urine in humid conditions, and wetting the surface can reactivate the odor. To combat this, look for products that work on hard and soft surfaces and incorporate them as a regular part of your cleaning routine.
- Use hydrogen-peroxide-based cleaners for removing both stains and odors.

Porous surfaces not only trap odor-causing bacteria and urine, but they also are susceptible to stains. To eliminate urine stains, Schultz suggested looking for products with surfactants that penetrate deep into surfaces to reach and break up the cause of stains.

Cleaning Grout Tip 3:

Anthony Melchiorri, also known as the "hotel fixer," and Dave Mesko, senior director of marketing for Cintas, addressed hotel and motel restrooms. For tile in guest restrooms, they recommended the use of deep cleaning services to make sure grout lines are free of buildup and odor-causing contaminants. Between these deep cleanings, hospitality managers can maintain high levels of cleanliness by providing the appropriate tools and supplies for their housekeepers. Melchiorri and Mesko recommended fully-stocked cleaning carts with chemicals to help housekeepers efficiently tend to guest rooms. One suggestion they provided was the installation of a chemical dispensing unit in the housekeepers' storage areas on each floor. These units ensure the correct cleaning dilution is mixed each time and can limit employees' contact with irritating chemicals. From chemicals to scrubbers, a number of tools stand ready to help cleaners battle restroom grout issues. Though it is one of the cleaning industry's biggest challenges, proper product use and employee training can help managers and contractors win the war against dingy, dark grout.

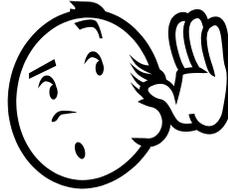
Lights Out!

About a month ago, an employee of McKinstry was going from school-to-school in the district and checking on the possibility of changing out the parking lot lights with newer more efficient light bulbs. Upgrading current lighting not only outside but



throughout the schools over a period of time will save thousands of

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Have You Heard?

- ◆ If you're running Microsoft XP that after April 8 Microsoft will no longer support or provide security updates for this operating system thus opening the door for hackers and criminals to manipulate and potentially damage your personal or business information? Find out more—[Click Me](#)
- ◆ Most disinfectants are considered pesticides by the EPA and PPE must be worn anytime they are dispensed or used for cleaning. That means reading the labels or SDS sheets to find out what needs to be used for personal safety. Most often it requires wearing splash-resistant chemical goggles and gloves. Find out more from the EPA—[Click Me](#)
- ◆ With the demise of incandescent light bulbs as of January 1, 2014, newer more energy-efficient bulbs are being manufactured. However, due to some legal loopholes, a new kind of incandescent bulb has been created appropriately called new-candescent. Sound intriguing? Missing the incandescents? - [Click Me](#)

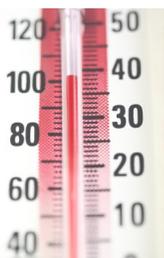


The element mercury, also known as quicksilver and hydrargyrum, was discovered in the year 2000 B.C. and is known by the chemical symbol Hg. Years ago the dangers of mercury were unknown. People found the strange element intriguing and odd. Kids played with it or brought it to school. Its liquid properties at room temperature and the shiny appeal make it a curiosity to be examined. The problem is that mercury is extremely poisonous. A mercury spill will require the assistance of hazardous waste personnel. In larger amounts the fumes from mercury can be breathed in and very dangerous. NEVER mess with mercury.

In fact, RCW codes of Washington ([Chapter 70.95M](#)) have some very specific rules regarding mercury. Here are some of them.



- ◆ *Elementary and secondary schools in Washington State are prohibited to purchase bulk elemental mercury or chemical mercury compounds, including mercury thermometers.*
- ◆ *Since January 1, 2006, **no school** in Washington State can store elemental mercury, mercury compounds or mercury thermometers on site.*
- ◆ *Schools can have one mercury barometer on site, if it is being used regularly and is calibrated. If it doesn't meet those criteria, it is considered a bulk mercury storage device and must be eliminated.*
- ◆ *No person in Washington State may use a mercury-added novelty device, mercury thermometers or mercury manometers.*



Since many fluorescent bulbs and old thermometers contain mercury as do other older novelty items and other devices, none of these should ever be thrown into the garbage. They need to be taken to a hazardous waste facility that will handle and recycle them. DON'T throw any fluorescent bulbs, CFL, T-5, T-8 or T-12 in the garbage. Avoid contaminating yourself and others!

In the event of a mercury spill, know what to do. Prepare for and prevent a mercury spill. Visit the [Don't Mess with Mercury](#) website for educational materials and animated video messages. You may also want to check out the DOH [Mercury](#) website. Be safe!

(Continued from [Lights](#))

dollars and a load of energy. But that will take time.

One major change in light bulbs came this year on January 1st when the production of [incandescent bulbs ended](#) per government regulations which were signed into law in 2007 by President George W. Bush to make way for better energy-efficient lighting alternatives. Businesses, schools and even homes across the U.S. will be affected. [Stores](#) will not sell these bulbs anymore.

By implementing these measures, governments hope to save valuable resources while making lighting that last longer, saves energy and works as well if not better than current bulbs.



Check out this new app for your smartphone. It's called *Angry Janitors* and not only incorporates a game but some learning too!

[Click here to read the article](#)

(Continued from [RMI's](#))

ping technology is the advent of micro-fiber mops. They are lighter and easier to use and the detrimental affects on the body are decreased.

If a microfiber flat mop is used for regular, routine mopping, there are some suggestions as to how to use them correctly.

1. *Adjust the mop handle so it's just below your chin when vertical.*
2. *If equipped, adjust the lower grip so it's about 12 inches below the top grip.*
3. *Place the mop handle/frame on the mop pad. Extend the pad end of the mop tool so it's only between 12 inches and 18 inches out from your feet.*
4. *Put one hand at the top of the handle the other hand on the lower grip. At this point the handle should be almost vertical; this will ensure that you're keeping your back straight.*
5. *Begin working the mop side to side in almost a figure eight motion while twisting the handle to keep the leading edge of the mop in front. You don't need to extend the mop to either side very far; you shouldn't be mopping more than a 3-foot or 4-foot path in any given pass. When you try to extend your*

path beyond that you'll have a tendency to over extend your arms and back because you're trying to reach further than needed with the mop.

6. *Work backward through the area you're mopping so you don't leave footprints on the still damp floor. Replace your microfiber mop pads often.*

On the other hand, if spills are being cleaned up, a traditional wet mop works much better due to its ability to absorb more liquid. Some suggestions as to the proper handling of wet mops is as follows.

1. *Keep your back straight. Posture is important to preventing injury.*
2. *Use the mop close to your body; avoid extending the mop or your arms out away from your body. Usually when people extend their arms when mopping they have a tendency to arch their back.*
3. *Switch your grip. Alternate which hand is high and low on the mop handle.*
4. *Use a mop handle that's comfortable in your hand. Some have a thicker diameter handle that is more comfortable to hold than a smaller diameter handle.*
5. *Use a mop bucket and wringer that*

has an ergonomic design. There are buckets on the market that make it possible to wring out a mop without bending over.

6. *Use floor drains to empty your mop bucket rather than lifting up to a sink. If floor drains aren't available, bail the bucket out with a smaller bucket until it is light enough to safely lift to the height of the sink.*

Another factor in reducing RMI's is matching the person's size to the size of the mop. According to the magazine mentioned at the outset, here are a few general rules that might help when doing this.

A person who is small in stature should be using 12- to 16-ounce (small, medium) wet mops and 18-inch microfiber flat mops. Average sized people should be using 16- to 24-ounce (medium, large) wet mops and 24-inch microfiber flat mops. Large people can handle 24-ounce wet mops and 24- to 36-inch microfiber flat mops.

Avoiding RMI's will add longevity and health to the worker and avoid long-term injuries. By applying a few simple techniques when mopping floors, RMI's can be greatly reduced.

For more information read the entire [article here.](#)