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Cleaning Green Like You Mean It

Many healthcare facilities managers (FMs) are watching the trend toward sustainable cleaning programs closely. But having seen so many other products and services that promise to be green, they wonder what to believe and how to implement a safe, effective, truly green program.

Green cleaning continues to gain momentum in hospitals, and there are many reasons for this trend, including demand from patients, cost of supplies and meeting stakeholder mandates, to name just a few. Additionally, requirements for LEED certification now include not only the purchase of sustainable cleaning products and materials, but also the use of sustainable cleaning equipment, source control of indoor chemicals and pollutants, and the implementation of a high performance cleaning program.



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Health Care Hazmats: There's More On Site Than Just Bloodborne Pathogens

Sanitizing, disinfecting, and cleaning chemicals are likely to be found throughout the facility. It is important to know the particular brands and styles that are being used to verify that proper precautions are being taken.

Health care employees and emergency first responders are taught to understand the importance of universal precautions and how to apply them to a variety of situations. These lessons, backed by a facility's plans, procedures, and protocols, help to prevent employee exposure to bloodborne pathogens and keep employees safe. But bloodborne pathogens aren't the only hazardous materials that health

care employees face. Cleaning and sanitizing products, preservatives, and even some pharmaceutical medications are among the harmful materials that health care employees may face each day.

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Summary of Management Standards for Hazardous Waste Pharmaceuticals Proposed Rule

On September 25, 2015, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) published a proposed rule titled "Management Standards for Hazardous Waste Pharmaceuticals" in the Federal Register. 80 Fed. Reg. 58,014. Comments on the proposed rule must be received by EPA on or before November 24, 2015.

The proposed rule adds a new subpart P to 40 CFR Part 266 to address hazardous waste pharmaceuticals that are generated or managed by healthcare facilities and pharmaceutical reverse distributors. One of the purposes of the rule is to impose controls on the current practice of sending expired, unused, or un-administered pharmaceuticals that also are hazardous wastes to reverse distributors

who then determine what if any credit the healthcare facilities will receive for those pharmaceuticals. Another purpose of the rule is to reduce the amount of pharmaceuticals disposed of through sewer systems.



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MedAssure SVCS, LLC | 149 Yellowbrook Rd., Suite 100 | Farmingdale | NJ | 07727