You Won’t Find Chemicals Here

Congratulations to the University of Wisconsin-Madison's Division of Housing for receiving the 2013 Silver Green Cleaning Award for Higher Education. For them, the move to go green meant eliminating chemicals for daily use. Jodi Krause, Assistant Director of Housekeeping, is just as surprised as anybody at this dramatic change—and how clean and healthy it's keeping her buildings. "If you told me 10 years ago that we'd be cleaning surfaces with water, I would have laughed." The fact is, that's exactly what Krause and her team are doing. They're using “ozone infused water” instead of glass cleaner or all-purpose cleaner for routine cleaning.

First, the department purchased a few handheld devices. Krause then set up a method to test results with help from an ATP tester. Staff would use charged water to clean a bathroom one day, and disinfectant to clean a different bathroom the next. After each cleaning, Krause would use the ATP device to read the amount of remaining soil remaining. When comparing the results of the experiment, she was floored. "We were getting zeros with the water in comparison to maybe a few hundred [for cleaning with disinfectant]. It was amazing for me to see those results and share them with other custodians. We would look at each other in disbelief, thinking this can't be right."

It turns out the ATP testing was right, which Krause's team confirmed after they expanded their experiments and eventually installed a wall-mounted devices from Tersano (tersano.com) in every building. Now they use ozone infused water to clean every bathroom and surface across 29 residence halls. They even put charged water in their auto scrubbers for floors and use it on carpets and furniture.

According to Tersano, the ozone systems work by applying a small amount of electricity to tap water, infusing the water with ozone, creating what they call “Aqueous Ozone.” During cleaning, the ozone in the solution helps lift dirt from surfaces. The ozone also aids in breaking down the walls of bacterial cells, viruses, and other germs. But Krause doesn't need a controlled experiment to prove that the cleaning solution was killing germs in her buildings. At University of Wisconsin-Madison, where 7,500 residential students live in tight quarters, flu and viruses can spread like wildfire. Every year, Krause and her staff treat at least one norovirus outbreak, shutting down entire floors. But this school year, they've had nothing—not one epidemic, not one floor shut down with the flu, not one health-related issue to mention. That’s all the proof she needs.

All in all, the move to the ozone system is keeping things simple and keeping costs low. Krause has projected that her department will save between $7,000 and $8,000 each year on chemical purchases alone.

This from: http://healthyschoolscampaign.org; March 21, 2014

http://healthyschoolscampaign.org/blog/you-wont-find-chemicals-here?utm_source=infocus&utm_medium=powermail&utm_campaign=blog-6