

## **From Calgary to California:**

*The Origins and Proliferation of Daylight Cleaning Systems in North America*

“Necessity... the mother of invention” – Plato

Dan Krysko, Manager of Corporate Properties and Real Estate Contracts at Agrium, tried everything to alleviate the cleaning issues plaguing his business. Agrium is the largest producer and marketer of industrial products and agricultural crop nutrients and distributor of specialty controlled-release fertilizers in North America. As the manager of an office complex facility in the southern suburbs of Calgary, Krysko tried everything to make his operations run smoothly. He switched contractors more than once, adjusted supervisors' schedules and even hired a consultant to ensure he was using the right cleaning specifications when issuing an RFP, yet the complaints continued.

For Krysko, cleaning only comprised approximately one percent of his overall job responsibilities; however, it was taking more than 20 percent of his time. He regularly had to deal with issues related to high turnover, poor cleaning and security which manifested into countless complaints from tenants. To alleviate some of the cleaning-related issues, Krysko regularly called upon a trusted day porter to attend to the issues left behind from the night cleaners.

When he considered all the variables contributing to the cleaning-related issues, he realized that cleaning at night was part of the problem. Cleaners who came in during the evening hours were often working their second jobs. With little supervision, they were hungry, tired, missing their families and largely inattentive to the cleaning duties to which they'd been assigned. Furthermore, the location of the building was difficult to access by public transportation, reducing their availability and increasing absenteeism.

To overcome these issues, Krysko teamed up with Daylight Cleaning Systems (DCS) to develop an extensive cleaning specification for a whole new daylight cleaning protocol. Realizing that the benefits far exceeded the costs, a new and innovative cleaning system was born.

Since its inception, several properties throughout Calgary have implemented daylight cleaning programs. The system's benefits, ranging from reduced costs and turnover to improved sustainability and tenant satisfaction, have led to an increasing number of facility managers implementing daylight cleaning programs. Daylight cleaning is also catching on in the United States where facility managers are realizing the benefits of this innovative process.

For many facility managers, implementing a daylight cleaning program involves a complete cultural change. It requires a comprehensive communication program that helps change some of the stereotypes and perceptions tenants may have about cleaners. However, when successfully executed, daylight cleaning develops into something that's not only good for business but the entire community.

This white paper will review implementations of daylight cleaning at several different property types. It will identify the common challenges of a traditional nighttime cleaning program. It will also discuss the benefits of daylight cleaning including reduced operational costs, improved tenant retention and employee morale, and its contribution to green building initiatives. In addition, it will provide a list of key steps to ensure the success of a daylight cleaning program.

### **What is Daylight Cleaning?**

As the name implies, daylight cleaning is an innovative system where cleaning-related activities are completed during the day. While the system can be customized to the specific needs of each facility, cleaners generally begin working before offices open — around 7 a.m.

Cleaners first attend to duties in high-traffic areas early in the morning before occupants arrive. Other critical areas such as presidential offices are also cleaned during this time.

Throughout the day, cleaners perform light-duty cleaning responsibilities such as general dusting, spot cleaning surfaces that are visibly soiled, emptying trash and vacuuming carpets with a non-motorized carpet cleaner. If a tenant does not want his or her office cleaned, they can simply “wave-off” the cleaner, notifying the cleaner that they should return at a later time.

If there is an issue immediately needing attention, such as a coffee spill or unstocked restroom, items can be tended to immediately rather than waiting for evening staff. Heavy cleaning responsibilities such as stripping and refinishing floors are often performed during weekend days when the building is unoccupied. Already employed throughout much of Europe, daylight cleaning is a model that more North American property managers see as a successful business practice.

### **Why Daylight Cleaning Works**

It is important to note that daylight cleaning is *not* a turn-key solution to all issues stemming from night cleaning programs. There are many facility types and facility management operations where daylight cleaning might not work, either due to the type of business conducted or personalities involved.

However, for most properties, daylight cleaning can be a solution to a series of common issues. From eliminating cleaning-related complaints to improving turnover rates – more facility managers throughout North America are finding that daylight cleaning just works.

### **I. Complaint Resolution**

Sharon Schneider of Tillyard Properties is the property manager at 715 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue, a 400,000 square-foot multi-tenant office tower in Calgary. She once addressed evening cleaning activities as “the spirits of cleaning.” For more than 22 years, the building was night cleaned. Like Krysko, Schneider was also spending an inordinate amount of time on cleaning-related complaints. She estimates that dealing with complaints took as much as one and a half to two hours a day.

“Cleaners would come in during the evenings, but the work never was completed,” said Schneider. “It was consistently an issue. At least 50 to 60 percent of the complaints pertained to the cleaning—or lack thereof.”

Once Schneider implemented a daylight cleaning program, cleaning-related complaints dropped 100 percent.

“The first three to six months was a transition period, but once we got it up and running, we basically eliminated complaints,” said Schneider. “It was phenomenal.”

Another daylight cleaning convert had a similar issue. Located in the heart of Calgary’s business district, Gulf Square is a unique 1,145,000 square foot, Class A office building that also made the transition to daylight cleaning. Like many other property managers, Laura Newcombe, Senior Property Manager of GWL Realty Advisors Inc., also experienced cleaning-related complaints

“Our tenants submitted cleaning-related issues online,” advised Newcombe. “When we arrived at work, we would be greeted with 10 to 20 issues that the day porter would need to immediately resolve. Since implementing daylight cleaning, those complaints have reduced by at least 70 percent.”

When cleaners work in the day, they have more visibility with tenants. Rather than place cleaning requests with facility managers, tenants can speak directly with the cleaners. In addition, tenants can see cleaning staff working, so it assures them that cleaning is performed. Particularly in times such as flu season when infection control is a concern, daylight cleaning improves tenants’ perception of clean, instilling confidence that their buildings are being cleaned properly.

## **II. Increased Security**

In addition to cleaning-related complaints, cleaners can also be easy candidates to blame for security-related issues, such as leaving doors open or unlocked or even the theft of personal or office property.

At Gulf Square, a percentage of high-profile corporate tenants such as Conoco Philips and Canadian Pacific conduct confidential business that requires high-level security. Theft-related complaints posed another challenge for the property managers.

“Right or wrong, the cleaning staff often gets blamed in cases of theft,” said Newcombe. “Whether or not they neglected to lock the door behind them or actually stole something from the premise, the cleaning staff is often implicated. We don’t like to see people wrongly accused. Since the implementation of daylight cleaning, we have been able to tell the tenants that they will be the last people to lock the door at night. This pleases them immensely.”

Improved security and increased confidentiality is a large reason why many high-level federal security buildings such as the new Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) building in Chicago now use daylight cleaning. In addition to using daylight cleaning for security purposes, it's also an extremely sustainable practice that helped make the FBI building

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the first Platinum recipient in the world under the U.S. Green Building Council's Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design for Existing Buildings: Operations and Maintenance (LEED-EB: O&M) program. It is also the first LEED-EB Platinum rated building in Chicago and one of just 16 LEED-EB Platinum projects in the world.

An additional often overlooked benefit from improved security is cost savings. Because buildings are vacant and locked during evening hours, it eliminates the need for security, which reduces operating costs.

**IV. Improved Sustainability – A Business Differentiator**

Commercial real estate buildings constitute 67 percent of the existing buildings in the market.<sup>1</sup> As you can imagine, the waste generated and energy consumed by these facilities can have a tremendous impact on the environment. Implementing daylight cleaning can help reduce the impact of a facility's operations on the environment by reducing the amount of fossil fuels consumed, thereby limiting the amount of greenhouse gasses emitted.

In particular, large office buildings are heavy energy consumers. In the U.S., commercial building owners spend hundreds of millions of dollars each year on energy. In 2003, the last year energy costs were collected, building owners spent approximately \$107 billion on major fuels. This includes costs incurred from HVAC and lighting.

In fact, lights contribute to more than 22 percent of a building's overall energy consumption (see Figure 1).

By turning off the lights after the tenants leave, most facility managers see an average energy savings of four to eight percent. With 600,000 square feet of space for example, that can amount to annual savings of more than \$120,000. In addition, light bulbs and ballasts last longer, reducing replacement costs.

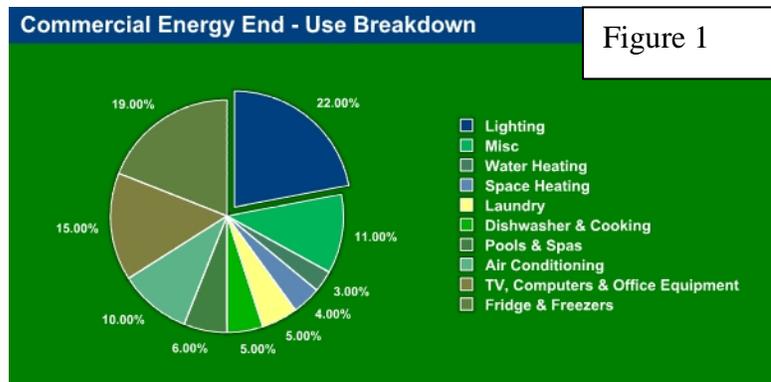


Figure 1

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.usgbc.org/DisplayPage.aspx?CMSPageID=1935>

In addition to the reduction in energy savings, daylight cleaning also reduces the amount of evening bird kills. The Fatal Light Awareness Program (FLAP) reports that more than 100 million birds die every year from window collisions. Lights shining from inside buildings confuse birds, causing significant changes to migratory patterns and in some cases death. Ornithologists at the Field Museum of Natural History have confirmed that simply turning off bright lights during evening hours or closing window blinds can reduce bird deaths by as much as 83 percent.



*Lights at night can disorient birds, causing changes to migration patterns.*

The environmental benefits of daylight cleaning are so significant, that it can also assist facilities in earning credits toward LEED certification, as was the case with the FBI Chicago location, or green building awards.

In 2009, Gulf Square Canada was presented with The Earth Award from BOMA Canada. The Earth Award offers recognition of excellence in resource preservation and environmentally sound commercial building management. It is presented to a building that has made significant efforts to address environmental issues faced by both older and newer buildings.

“Our daylight cleaning system helped differentiate our operations from others under consideration,” said Newcombe. “We have always been dedicated to keeping our operations as energy-efficient as possible, and daylight cleaning is just another way we have been able to limit our environmental impact.”

## V. Social Responsibility

In addition to the positive impact on tenant satisfaction and the environment, the benefits of a daylight cleaning program on frontline cleaning staff should also be considered. For businesses dedicated to making a social impact, daylight cleaning can help improve local communities. This occurs for several reasons:

- 1) **Increased family time:** Working during the day gives cleaning staff the opportunity to be at home during the evening with their families. According to a *U.S. News & World Reports*<sup>2</sup> article, a family that eats together stays together. This also gives parents more oversight of their children, limiting opportunities for children to get involved in activities such as crime or drug use.
- 2) **Safer commutes:** Cleaning workers are generally women who have to rely upon public transportation to commute to and from work. During evening hours, public transportation operates less frequently, increasing their exposure to potential crimes.

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<sup>2</sup> <http://health.usnews.com/usnews/health/briefs/childrenshealth/hb041027a.htm>

- 3) **Improved language skills:** Cleaning workers are often from outside North America and have limited English skills. Daylight cleaning increases the workers' interaction with building tenants, forcing them to communicate in English and improving their language skills.
- 4) **Elevated confidence and self image:** Cleaning workers are often not respected due to common perceptions. Daylight cleaning helps personalize the task, giving tenants more appreciation for the work cleaners perform. This in turn gives cleaners more confidence in themselves and the work they do.

Improving the livelihood of cleaning workers with daylight cleaning also translates into financial savings for businesses.

Finding and keeping reliable cleaning workers has always been a challenge for facility managers. It has been a particular challenge for businesses in Calgary, which has experienced a large oil boon in recent years. In its peak, unskilled laborers were able to make between \$60,000 – 70,000 driving a truck. Jobs were plentiful and so were the wages. This made it difficult to locate and maintain a consistent cleaning staff.

Before the implementation of daylight cleaning six years ago, Sharon Schneider was plagued with turnover-related issues at 715-5<sup>th</sup> Avenue. Faces changed on a daily basis leading to inconsistencies in the cleaning performed and constant retraining.

“Each evening I would see anywhere from two to three new cleaners,” said Schneider. “They were only working four hours an evening and were paid one dollar more than minimum wage, so really there wasn't much of a financial incentive for them to make the commute for such little money.”

Since the transition to daylight cleaning, Schneider has maintained the same staff for last six years.

“We were experiencing severe turnover in our operations at Agrium,” said Krysko. “Our building is located in the suburbs of Calgary, so it is difficult to reach by public transportation. Since we integrated daylight cleaning into our system, our turnover has been virtually eliminated. It's been an opportunity to give cleaners normal lives, allowing them to work like everyone else and be at home in the evenings with their children.”

Other facilities where daylight cleaning is used have experienced a drop in turnover of up to 800 percent.

Reducing turnover translates into cost savings for facility managers. For example, if a cleaning worker only works for one month before quitting and received training for approximately 1.5 hours a night for the first week or a total of 7.5 hours, approximately \$60 - \$100 per employee would be lost. Multiply that by 100 employees and the cost can impact any facility program's bottom line.

Upon implementing a daylight cleaning program, almost all facilities see a substantial reduction in employee turnover.

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### **From Calgary to California**

Based on much of the success experienced by businesses in Calgary, the daylight cleaning system is now catching hold in the U.S. It’s been a natural fit for businesses looking to expand the sustainability of their operations, reduce costs and differentiate their properties from competitors.

John Sorich, director of office services at Fluor Enterprises® in Aliso Viejo, Calif., has recently implemented daylight cleaning into the company’s headquarters as a pilot for future roll outs. Fluor is a FORTUNE 500 company that delivers engineering, procurement, construction, maintenance (EPCM), and project management to governments and clients in diverse industries around the world.

While still in the initial stages of the program’s roll out, Sorich has heard nothing but positive feedback from cleaning staff. In addition, he anticipates a reduction in energy costs because he has been able to turn off the lights five hours earlier each evening.

“Before implementing daylight cleaning, our lights were on until 2 a.m.,” said Sorich. “Now we are able to shut off the lights by 9 p.m. In addition to cost savings, this has led to a significant reduction in our carbon footprint.”

When JohnsonDiversey, a leading provider of commercial cleaning and hygiene solutions, implemented daylight cleaning at its global headquarters, it found a substantial savings in custodial costs in addition to energy savings. As the program was further refined, JohnsonDiversey’s labor costs continued to decrease as a result of increased productivity. The cleaning staff worked harder when in the presence of company employees.

### **Best Practices At-A-Glance**

1. **Prepare the right specifications.** Make sure your RFP clearly communicates the requirements for a daylight cleaning system.
2. **Select the right team.** Work with a company that is flexible and willing to try new things. Use cleaning staff who are able to speak basic English and communicate with tenants.
3. **Train the team.** Educate staff on daylight cleaning protocol. Make sure staff has a clear understanding of how to engage with tenants and special signs, such as the “wave-off.”
4. **Communicate with tenants.** Before your daylight cleaning program is implemented, provide opportunities for tenants to communicate their concerns or special requests to gain buy-in and limit possible interruptions with the roll out.

The daylight cleaning system saves JohnsonDiversey 40.2 percent compared to its custodial spend over last year during the same months. The total labor savings equates to \$164,303 annually.

## **Best Practices for Your Daylight Cleaning Program**

Daylight cleaning is at its tipping point. As more facility managers and building owners start reaping the dividends from the program and realize it contributes to a successful property management model, the more widespread it will become.

However, daylight cleaning continues to proliferate throughout more properties, Sorich warns against going it alone when considering a program for your business.

“Businesses that are considering a daylight cleaning program should enlist the assistance of an experienced consultancy to help facilitate the process,” he said. “There are so many considerations to be made that janitorial organizations typically do not have the resources to properly put the program in place. Using a company that can help communicate the program, train workers and measure results will help limit any complications and ensure the success of your program.”

Communication and training are two key aspects of daylight cleaning. One of the first things you should do is make sure the proper specifications are in place when looking for the right cleaning partner. When using an outsourced cleaning company, look for a progressive business that is forward-thinking and flexible. There is not a one-size-fits-all daylight cleaning solution, so the contractor must be able to work with you to make the necessary adjustments in your program.

When hiring staff, it is important to look for workers with basic English skills so they can communicate with your tenants. Tenants need to be able to easily identify any cleaning-related issues with the staff. Staff must then be able to resolve that problem immediately, so clear communication is a must.

“Beyond basic communication about cleaning-specific tasks, it’s important that cleaners can hold basic discussions as well,” said Schneider of Tillyard. “The relationship that forms between tenants and workers is one of the intangible benefits of daylight cleaning. There’s a bond that often develops where tenants take ownership of the worker cleaning their space. If a person isn’t able to communicate with the tenant, this isn’t as likely to happen.”

After the right team is on board, workers need to be properly trained. There are many differences between night cleaning and daylight cleaning, so oftentimes cleaning staff must learn a new system that is specialist-driven as opposed to zone based. In addition,



*A tenant cues the cleaning worker to come back later with a “wave-off.”*

workers must learn cues tenants will give, such as the “wave-off,” which means that the cleaner should come back later.

While training the staff, it is equally important to prepare tenants for the transition. It is imperative to open up a forum for discussion about the changes. Frequently, tenants have a preconceived notion of daylight cleaning and have a feeling that it will significantly intrude on their business. This can be worked through with introductory letters, question-and-answer sessions and follow-up materials such as posters and table tents. By giving tenants the opportunity to voice their opinions and concerns and addressing those concerns during program development, buy in should be easier to attain. This can also help reduce complications with the program rollout.

### **A Light Future**

Propelled by a desire to make a difference in their community, reduce their impact on the environment and a quest for innovative systems, property managers in Calgary have been among the first in North America to embrace daylight cleaning. It has resulted in happier tenants and employees, lower costs and improved sustainability. As more businesses begin to understand the benefits, the phenomena will continue to spread, not only benefitting individual facilities, but local communities and the environment as a whole.

It is important to note that there are many components and variables to a successful daylight cleaning program. By working with a company that understands the potential implications of the system while offering the resources to train employees and communicate with your tenants, you can ensure a smooth transition into the light.

*For more information on how daylight cleaning can work at your property, go to <http://www.dcsglobalenterprise.com/home.php> or call 1-877-225-9603.*