

# GRAND AWARD

## UNIVERSITIES

### >> UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON, SEATTLE



#### PROGRAM INFORMATION

**Number of students:** 40,855

**Square footage maintained:** 10,395,000 sq. ft.

**Number of full-time custodians:** 276

**Annual cleaning budget:** \$9,769,000

**Green-cleaning team members:** Gene Woodard, Director of Facilities Services Custodial Division; Sattia Sear, Scott Spencer, Assistant Directors

**T**he University of Washington officially established its green-cleaning policy in 2004, but its environmental efforts began as early as 1986 when the university stopped using Phenol-based disinfectants. Almost every year since then, it has taken steps toward a greener campus.

To help meet its green-cleaning goals, the university chooses cleaning products based on their ability to reduce water consumption, eliminate harsher cleaning chemicals, and remove contaminants without re-introducing them into the air. For all of its "above-the-floor" cleaning, it chooses Green Seal-certified products and automatic chemical-dispensing systems.

Staff members are trained in green-cleaning practices and procedures. The university recycles all product packages and containers, has replaced the use of harsh chemicals with steam cleaning, and has replaced oil-treated dust mops with microfiber dust mops. It has eliminated the use of aerosols, converted from liquid hand soap to foam hand soap, and standardized autoscrubbers to take advantage of low-water technology.

In an effort to increase the recycling rate from 44 percent to 60 percent, the university is initiating a pilot program that includes adding 96-gallon totes to classrooms and lecture halls so recyclable beverage containers, newspapers and regular paper are more likely to be collected as recyclable waste.

The university also initiated a desk-side wastebasket reduction program, slightly reducing the number of traditional desk waste containers in the offices throughout campus. In 2008, this will prevent liners from 1,800 to 2,000 containers from reaching landfills.

Statistical evidence shows that in 2005-06, the university recycled 5,000 tons of material (including 255 tons of aluminum, glass and tin), 642 tons of cardboard and 1,032 tons of mixed paper. There have been fewer odors from closets and storage rooms since oil-treated dust mops were eliminated. Client surveys find that 96 percent of the respondents say the university is meeting or exceeding their cleaning needs. ■

Photographer: Bruce Jitodai