

Going green

Newer, safer cleaning products way of the future

CLEAN AND GREEN – that's the idea behind a pilot project Facilities Management in St. John's is heading up here at Memorial. The idea is simple: to replace conventional cleaning chemicals with products that are more environmentally friendly, which improve the health and safety of the university community and which are much more effective than conventional cleaners.

Green cleaners are cleaning chemicals certified by Green Seal or Environmental Choice, independent non-profit organizations which set environmental standards for products. Green Seal is the American organization that sets standards for companies in the U.S., while Environmental Choice, the Canadian standard with have the Government of Canada Seal of approval. These chemicals have been certified by these independent organizations and have met stringent environmental and occupational and safety standards.

Energy matters

Facilities Management has been testing green chemicals such as floor finishes, floor strippers, carpet shampoos, bathroom cleaners and items such as microfibre cloths for the past two years. This year officials have been testing products in the University Centre, as well as the Science, Physical Education and Engineering Buildings. The results have been overwhelming.

"By far, green cleaners out-perform traditional conventional products," said Rick Lawes, custodial supervisor. "These products are certified to be safest products on the market for the custodian, the customer and environment which ties into the Sustainability Program here at Memorial.

"We will be using less green chemical than conventional chemicals due their effectiveness and dispensing systems. They improve air quality with their low volatile organic compounds, too.

"The change is necessary to ensure that we are doing everything to improve the health and safety of the university community by using safest and environmental products that are



available. Our mission statement is the pursuit of excellence in delivery of services. If we are not using the best products for our staff and customers, we are not living up to our commitment."

Facilities Management hopes to start using green cleaners in all of its buildings in the near future.

Here, custodian John Martin is seen demonstrating one of the microfibre cleaning clothes.