GREEN CLEANING AWARD FOR SCHOOLS & UNIVERSITIES

HONORABLE MENTION

UNIVERSITIES

GEORGIA INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY, ATLANTA

PROGRAM INFORMATION

Number of students: 17,935
Square footage maintained: 6,755,298 sq. ft.
Number of full-time custodians: 244
Annual cleaning budget: $5,634,186

Green-cleaning team members: Chuck Rhodes, Associate Vice President; Warren Page, Director of Operations & Maintenance; Tommy Little, Manager of Building Services; Stanley Smith, Judy Minniefield, Staff Members; Jack Adelman/SouthEast LINK, Cleaning Contractor; John Russell, Steve Ashkin, The Ashkin Group, LLC

Green-cleaning efforts at Georgia Institute of Technology began in 2004 when the university began using a Green Seal-certified, general-purpose cleaner. It then dismantled its entire chemical inventory of 25 products and started over with five green products. The university uses microfiber mops and rags, and environmentally friendly hand soap, paper products, cleaning equipment, floor finish, stripper, carpet cleaner, garbage bags and towel dispensers.

University purchasing policies require that Georgia Tech's vendors provide only green products. Also, product manufacturers, distributors or a third party must offer training or training materials on the proper use of the product. Primary packaging for the product must be recyclable.

Environmentally friendly cleaning equipment includes scrubbers that employ foam cleaning, which use up to 70 percent less water and 90 percent less chemical than traditional equipment. The university also uses backpack vacuums that have high-filtration, quiet operation and exceed HEPA requirements. Georgia Tech operates its own in-house laundry and replaced its residential washing machines that required 28 gallons of water with front-load washers that require 14 gallons of water to wash microfiber mops and rags.

Records show a decline in employee absentee rates from July 2006 to the present. At its annual Earth Day event this year, the campus community selected the Georgia Tech Building Services Department from a group of 65 exhibitors to receive "The Most Informative Booth," 10th Annual Earth Day, April 20th, 2007 Award. The theme was green cleaning.