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Baltimore City Hall to Clean “Green”

Baltimore, MD (October 5, 2007) – Mayor Sheila Dixon announced that City Hall and two Baltimore City courthouses are going “green”. As part of Mayor Dixon’s Cleaner Greener Baltimore initiative, the city is partnering with Multicorps and Sun Valley Green to transition the city buildings now being cleaned with toxic products to environmentally sensitive cleaning products.

This initial pilot program will be implemented by Multicorps and will eliminate the use of toxic products. After the successful pilot, Mayor Dixon will mandate that all city buildings be cleaned using environmentally sensitive cleaning products.

“As Mayor of the largest city in Maryland, I am proud to take the lead in ensuring that our City’s staff, as well as visitors to our City buildings, are not exposed to toxins that endanger their well-being,” said Mayor Dixon. “I am hopeful that we will see positive results, and can then expand these cleaning products to all city-owned buildings.”

“Green cleaning” refers to the process of using cleaning substances that do not contain harsh chemical ingredients (such as ammonia) found in many conventional cleaners. Green cleaners are made from biodegradable detergents and emulsifiers. Using green cleaners will decrease air pollution, water pollution, ozone depletion and global climate change while at the same time, reducing health problems associated with allergens, chemical sensitivities and contaminants, such as mold and bacteria. Green cleaning products contain low VOC (Volatile Organic Compound) levels that emit fewer fumes and are gentler on city facilities.

By eliminating toxic cleaners the city will increase worker satisfaction, improve morale, reduce absenteeism, and increase productivity, efficiency and retention. In addition, the city will create a better indoor environment for its customers. By cleaning green the city estimates will reduce costs for the city building management and reduce costs associated with sick leave, health care, and productivity loss. In addition, green cleaning practitioners use energy-efficient equipment and focus on preventative maintenance to reduce expenses.

Multicorps, a local Baltimore business currently has the janitorial services contract with the City of Baltimore and enthusiastically endorsed the Mayor’s initiative and soon hopes to be cleaning all of its Baltimore buildings, both city owned and commercial, with green cleaning products.

Sun Valley Green is an environmentally focused company whose mission is to eliminate harmful and deadly toxins from cleaning products that are used in public areas. They have developed a line of Green Seal certified environmentally preferable cleaning products that will be used as part of the pilot in Baltimore that are environmentally safe without sacrificing cleaning effectiveness or raising costs. For more information go to www.sunvalleygreen.com.

ADDITIONAL FACTS:

Currently, toxic cleaners are hurting our city and its most vulnerable residents. OSHA estimates that poor air quality, also known as Sick Building Syndrome (SBS) affects 30 to 70 million U.S. workers nationwide and 37 percent of the population suffers from chemical sensitivities, skin rashes, or allergies. In addition, EPA studies show that the environment is worsening and warns that:

- One out of every three cleaning chemicals used to clean schools in the U.S. is known to cause human health or environmental problems
- Up to 30 percent of all buildings contain indoor air contamination
- Indoor pollution costs more than \$50 billion in the U.S. alone for healthcare, absenteeism, lost production, and lost revenue
- Allergic reactions to “sick” indoor air environments account for more than 10 million workdays missed by U.S. employees each year
- Six of every 100 janitors lose time from work due to an on-the-job chemical injury each year, with injuries ranging from respiratory problems to burns to eye irritation.
- Human exposure to air pollutants indoors is 2-5 times, and as much as 100 times, higher than outdoor levels.
- Cleaning chemicals are responsible for about eight percent of total non-vehicular emissions of VOCs, which can cause respiratory problems, contribute to smog formation, and inhibit plant growth

FDA reports that an estimated 35% of conventional cleaning products can cause blindness, severe skin damage or damage to organs through the skin.

On average 58.2lbs of chemical cleaning products are used per janitor per year and 35% of chemical cleaners require extreme care during use because they can blind or cause severe skin and respiratory damage to an unprotected user. Whereas the city can eliminate these potential health issues with the use of green cleaning supplies.

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