



Maintenance Strategy – Interior Walls, Floors, Ceilings and Stairs

This category covers a broad range of a buildings maintenance and upkeep requirements for walls, floors, ceilings and stair systems and sub systems. The information contained in this document are general recommendations and guidelines designed to bring attention to the importance and benefits of preventive maintenance strategies supporting quality educational environments. It is important for facility managers and maintenance staff to be aware of the specific systems asset types and maintenance required to effectively maintain the systems functionality and reliability through preventive maintenance requirements. Qualified in-house maintenance combined with certified vendor staff may be necessary to manage systems safely and effectively. Consult manufacturer recommendations for specific maintenance requirements.

Someone once said, we spend more than 90% of our time in the built environment. Whether an office, home, warehouse, or school environment we spend much of our time inside a building of some type. The built environment is important. It is also important to consider your facilities overall quality which may include air quality but it is equally important to look at overlooked systems that require routine cleaning and maintenance such as the walls that make up our work areas, spaces, classrooms, the conditions of flooring, ceilings and even stairs.

Cleaning – Maintaining a healthy school environment has taken on even more importance due to increased worries about the spread of COVID-19 and educational facility managers are charged with making sure classrooms, hallways and common spaces are well maintained. We can all agree that clean, healthier spaces offer a host of benefits. This includes promoting positive working and learning environments, showcasing the school's commitment to hygiene and respect for occupants. From a long term financial standpoint, highly maintained educational buildings reduce the need to replace and repair assets constantly. A regular cleaning and maintenance schedule is a vital component to creating a well maintained space and positive environment for students, teachers, employees and visitors. Routine cleaning processes combined with quality products and tools are critical functions that when implemented will support quality learning environments further supporting efficiencies and productivity in staff.

Facility managers are charged with creating a clean and maintained environment for students and teachers. Many facility managers coordinate summer maintenance and cleaning routines in preparation for students and staff to return to a pristine environment as soon as school is let out for the summer. These routines should include steps to maintain the condition of walls, the different types of flooring and ceilings, and stairwells that exist in our public schools.

Maintenance Considerations – All of the systems listed above also need routine maintenance, restoration and repairs. Over time, walls, floors, ceilings and stair systems undergo the process of wear and tear. A small leak in the roof may stain ceiling tiles or damage walls and a systematic routine review and replacement may be necessary to continue to provide a quality environment. Even walls need refresh coat of paint to maintain their appeal. Floor systems, from numerous hard surfaces to carpet wear down from constant use and should be considered for repair or replacement as time goes by. Stairs and stair landings should also be reviewed routinely to ensure they are intact and safe to use. Here are some routine items to look for:

- **Walls** – Routine cleaning of high touch point areas such around light switches, white boards, bulletin boards. Check for dust accumulation and cob-webs in high areas. Routinely check for cracks or splitting in the finish (paint, bricks, tuck-points etc.), check for water damage (find the source), bubbling, holes, physical damage, or vandalism. Coordinate repairs to maintain quality conditions.
- **Floors** – Most educational facilities have several types of floor systems: entrance ways may have walk-off mats, restrooms have tile and grout features and libraries have carpet supporting a quieter environment. Different types of flooring require different types of maintenance. Routinely check for overall condition & cleanliness; physical damage and trip hazards. Flooring and baseboards should be intact and undamaged. Carpets should have no tearing or severely worn areas causing trip hazards. Thresholds should be intact and installed well with no loose areas.
- **Ceilings** – Routinely check for general conditions, physical or structural damage (stained, broken or missing ceiling tiles, grid & hard ceilings etc.). Coordinate repairs as necessary. Follow up on identified stained ceiling tiles to determine the cause of the stain.
- **Stairs** – Stairs and stair landings should be intact and surfaces clean with no physical damage. Installed handrails should be in good physical condition with no trip hazards. Coordinate prioritized repairs as soon as possible.