Window Cleaning – Course Notes

Course Overview

This course covers the cleaning of glass surfaces, including windows, in both internal and external situations. The course covers the identification of various types of soil and staining found on windows and the equipment required to clean these soils. The selection of appropriate equipment, chemicals and cleaning methods is essential to performing the task safely and efficiently.

In this course you will learn how to:

Section 1 - Assess job for window cleaning
Section 2 - Select Equipment & Chemicals
Section 3 - Clean windows using a variety of cleaning techniques
Section 4 - Cleaning site and equipment

This course covers all required knowledge content for the following competency units:

CPPCLO2009A Clean glass surfaces
CPPCLO3036A Clean at high levels
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Section 1 - Assess job for window cleaning

When you finish this section you will have an understanding of the following concepts and ideas:

- Introduction to window cleaning
- Six ways to avoid damaging glass
- Assess the site prior to cleaning
1.2 Introduction

Why Clean Windows?

The obvious reasons for cleaning windows are:

- Professional business image for commercial buildings
- Better view
- Better heat efficiency.

Glass will, over time, become soiled with a variety of contaminants if regular window cleaning is not occurring. These soils will greatly detract from the windows appearance and the property's overall 'look of cleanliness'. Some of the major soils which accumulate on exterior windows include:

- Soils and dust
- Contaminants and pollutants found in rain
- Mineral deposits (hard water deposits) from hoses and sprinkler systems
- Salt spray – if close to ocean
- Leaching of minerals from window frames and building surfaces

Of the above soils hard water minerals pose the biggest threat to damaging glass windows. Overspray from garden hoses and sprinklers can lead to build-up of hard water mineral deposits, which can in turn damage the glass surface. Overspray from garden hoses and sprinklers should be avoided.

The need for basic glass restoration can usually be avoided with regular cleaning of exterior window glass (minimum of twice yearly).

Understanding Glass

Glass is porous, meaning it is full of tiny holes which are not visible to the human eye. When viewed under a micro-scope a sheet of glass is fully of peaks and valleys that can capture and hold mineral deposits. If these contaminate are left long enough on a windows surface, it will create a white stain that will render your standard window cleaning techniques ineffective.
1.3 Six ways to avoid damaging glass

#1 – Do NOT use abrasive nylon pads
Abrasive nylon scrub pads like the ones found on the back of many household dishwashing sponges, will scratch window glass. Window glass is much softer than glass manufactured for beverage/drink glasses.

Specialized nylon pads, very fine grade steel wool (000 grade), and glass scrapers are the professional window cleaner’s choice to safely remove stickers, printing (decals) and other hard to remove debris from window glass.

#2 - Do NOT use razor blades on dry glass
A common and costly mistake is window glass scratched from improper razor blade use. To remove stickers, decals, tape and paint window glass MUST be lubricated BEFORE using a glass scraper. Typically, most professional window cleaners use soap and water to lubricate glass which helps minimize the occurrence of scratches.

WARNING: It is also important to note that razor blades cannot be used on 'Treated Glass Surfaces', tinted or mirrored window glass, and special care must be given when working on 'Tempered Glass' (heat strengthened) glass common indoors and other high-impact areas.

Tips when using glass scraper.
- Only use a professional grade glass scraper
- Always lubricate surface with detergent before using a scraper
- Start each project with a new blade
- Replace scraper blades when damaged or dull from use
- Test razor in an inconspicuous place on glass, before scraping entire surface

Correct glass scraping procedures will be covered in more detail in section 4.

#3 - The importance of regular window cleaning
As mentioned in Section 1.1, window glass can become permanently stained from hard water deposits caused by garden hose and sprinklers, rain water and newly painted surfaces.

To protect buildings windows it is normally recommended to clean window glass a minimum of 2 times per year.

#4 - Do NOT clean windows with a garden hose
Although this technique can remove some of the dirt and grime from exterior windows, this technique can leave mineral deposits on windows, which can damage the glass surface.

When using professional window cleaning techniques, tap water is removed from the glass surface with a window squeegee.

#5 - Replace or remove metal window screens
As already discussed, corrosion can occur on glass surface leaving the glass with a hazy/white etched appearance.

Metal corrosion: Metal around exterior window which has been exposed to rain or humid conditions for many years can slowly deteriorate and become oxidized (corrodes). The corroded metal can then begin to bleed into the glass making restoration procedures necessary.
Corrosion is most commonly seen on windows with metal screens. This condition penetrates exterior glass surfaces and renders regular window clearing techniques ineffective. In most cases this glass can be restored with acidic restoration chemicals.

#6 – Use window cleaning detergent to clean glass

Whilst it is always recommended to use a properly designed window cleaning detergent for cleaning glass, many professional window cleaners use a high foaming dishwashing detergent such as “Morning Fresh”.

WARNING: Overuse of dishwashing detergents can leave residues on the glass surface which then attracts dust and soils (referred to as re-soiling). Rapid resoling will require the window to be cleaned more frequently.

Note: Normal ‘spray on’ window clean detergents are designed for indoor use and are not recommended for cleaning exterior glass surfaces.

1.4 Assess the site prior to cleaning

Before you start cleaning exterior glass, assess (look at) the site so you can decide on the safest way to carry out the cleaning.

You must:

- Check with your client, site supervisor or other relevant person to make sure you have access to the site when required;
- Choose a suitable access method and, if relevant, have a licence for that method;
- Look for hazards (things that may cause injury); and
- Report hazards straight away and, if necessary, delay (put off) cleaning.

Look for risks and hazards

Assess the area to be cleaned and identify any WHS (Workplace Health and Safety) risks or hazards that may be present in the area of operation. Risks and hazards may include:

- Broken glass and other sharp surfaces e.g., metal frame corners.
- Confined/restricted spaces e.g., cleaning the inside of a glass display case or complex angled windows.
- Dust and fibres e.g., commonly found on window ledges.
- Extremes of heat and temperature e.g., cleaning exterior glass on a very hot day, cleaning interior glass on a hot day in a poorly ventilated area.
- Fatigue e.g., if the area to be cleaned is large, regular rest periods should be negotiated, or perhaps additional window cleaners are required.
- When working at height (with extension poles or from a ladder) check location of electrical wires, trees or other risks which could interfere with cleaning.
- If working from a ladder confirm company and site procedures for use of ladders prior to commencing any work.
- Underfoot conditions e.g., slippery, uneven and rough surfaces
- Unrestricted people access to the area e.g., in a shopping centre or department store where customers walk within close range of you when cleaning.
Before commencing any cleaning you should:

- Report any defects or damage before commencing work.
- Determine the type of glass to ensure the cleaning method will not damage the glass surface or any coatings on the glass.
- Check the glass for defects to avoid injury and damage.
- Only use spot cleaning methods where the glass is externally tinted or soft coated.

Example: Tom had to remove some paint stains from a row of windows on the first level of an office building. He was in a hurry so he did not check for hazards.

Tom chose a metal extension ladder for the job. As he lifted the ladder up to the glass, it touched an electric wire. The electric current ran down the ladder and Tom's hands were badly burned.

To prevent injuries such as this, it is very important to look for risks and hazards. If you identify a hazard, report it straight away. Check with the site manager about the procedure used for reporting hazards at your work site.

If necessary, delay cleaning until the risk of injury or damage can be prevented.

**Using extension poles:**

Where possible window cleaning should always be performed standing on the ground. Modern extension poles made of carbon fibre can be used to clean windows up to three stories (levels) high.

**1.5 OH&S and other implications**

There are a few things you need to be aware of that relate to your safety when cleaning glass surfaces:

- Cracked or broken glass is potentially dangerous if not cleaned with care. Fortunately, because broken glass is immediately identified as a workplace hazard, if is usually replace quickly by the client.
- Glass display cases, counter tops and some partitions must also be cleaned using the minimum amount of pressure to do the job. This is to minimise the risk of breaking the glass, or damaging the supporting framework.
- Using poor quality, or incorrectly mixed glass cleaning chemicals can leave smearing on the glass.
- Using the wrong chemical can damage the glass surface.
- Always check glass surfaces into the direction of the light source to check for smudging or missed areas after you have cleaned the glass.

**Notify appropriate personnel**

Notify the site manager and relevant staff or building occupants well in advance of your intention to perform window cleaning. Confirm there will not be staff or business activities that may prevent you from carrying out your cleaning. If you cannot properly access and or barricade the site you need to negotiate a way to overcome these issues with the site manager prior to commencing any window cleaning.
Section 2 - Select equipment & chemicals

When you finish this section you will have an understanding of the following concepts and ideas:

- Using ladders for window cleaning
- Cleaning windows with telescopic poles
- Essential window cleaning tools
2.1 Using ladders for window cleaning

Where possible window cleaning should always be performed standing on the ground. Modern extension poles made of carbon fibre can be used to clean windows up to three stories (levels) high.

However, in some situations a ladder may be required to access difficult to reach areas that cannot be cleaned using an extension pole. Before using a ladder check your workplace procedures for using ladders.

Before you use a ladder, check that:
- the ladder is appropriate for the task;
- the rungs are secure;
- there are no cracks or signs of damage; and
- the ladder is clean and free of dirt, grease or moisture.

If the ladder is damaged, do not use it and report the damage to the site manager immediately.

When you are using a ladder for high level cleaning, remember the following things:
- Use barricades or caution signs to prevent injury to yourself or others.
- Do not use a ladder near electrical wires. All ladders have the potential to conduct electricity.
- Do not place a ladder in front of a door unless the door is fastened and/or you use barricades or caution signs.
- Make sure the ladder is on a firm, non-slippery level surface.
- Only one person should be on the ladder at a time.
- Do not leave ladders unattended in a public place.
- Wear non-slip footwear.
- Always work as part of a team.

Securing a ladder

Make sure the ladder is secure before you climb it. How you do this depends on the type of cleaning you are doing. If possible, secure the foot of the ladder.

It is a legal requirement under workplace health and safety laws to properly secure a ladder before use. Ladders MUST be secured OR stabilised by footing (someone standing at the foot of the ladder and holding it) while you are climbing or working from them.

For more information on using ladders refer to the attached fact sheet from Workcover NSW.
2.2 Cleaning windows with telescopic poles

Telescopic poles are made from flexible aluminium or carbon fibre. They are available in lengths up to approximately 15 metres. Some are designed to be water fed via a hose attachment. Special, soft bristled brushes with perforate stocks, (to allow water to flow through) are connected to the top end of the telescopic pole.

A plastic water hose is sometimes fitted to the brush and runs down the length of the pole. It is fastened to the pole with retaining clips. At the bottom end of the hose is a connector to connect the window cleaning pole to a water tap.

The water is turned on at the tap and travels up the pole to the brush. The water flow can be regulated either from the pole or at the tap. The operator can then clean the glass by agitating the brush against the window, cleaning the frames first and then the window panes.

If the glass is not to be squeegeed dry, purified (de-ionised) water is used because it air dries without leaving spots on the glass. When using purified water, no detergent is used because it cannot be squeegeed or wiped off the glass.

Working with extension poles is dangerous if you do not pay attention to both ends of the pole i.e. the application tool end and the handle end. You could easily hurt a passer-by if you are not careful.

You must barricade the area before you start window cleaning with large extension poles. Always be aware of what, and who is around you while window cleaning at high levels.

2.3 The window squeegee

The window squeegee is the tool used for removing water or detergent solution from the window or glass surface. They come in a variety of different styles and configurations to enable the operator to clean glass in ‘difficult to reach’ areas. Squeegees are made up of three main parts:

The handle or 'stock'

This is light in weight and has a clamp at one end. The handle is often formed so that it can be quickly fitted to and extension pole if required.

The channel

The metal channel clips into the clamp on the handle and is held in place by the clamp. This is held closed tight onto the channel by either a locking device or bolts fitted to the clamp. The channel shown at right already has the rubber blade fitted.

The blade

The thick side of the rubber blade is inserted at one end of the channel and slipped along the inside of the channel. It is then pulled along to the opposite end. The blade is pulled along through the channel until both ends of the blade are level with the ends of the channel. If the blade it too long for the channel, the excess is cut off with scissors or a knife.

A slide-in clip is inserted into each end of the channel after the blade has been inserted. The clips lock the blade in place.

Remember: The soft rubber blade is easily chipped or torn if it hits against sharp edges or abrasive soiling. Chipping will cause the squeegee to leave streaks on the glass surface.
2.4 The Strip Washer (Window washer)

This tool allows you to scrub large areas of window glass with even pressure; quickly.

Strip washers come in two replaceable parts; a T-bar and a replacement sleeve.

Several varieties are available from different manufacturers that feature:

1. Stationary or swivelling heads
2. Different lengths
3. Replacement sleeves made of different materials suited for a variety of cleaning needs

Some of the replacement sleeves available have nylon pads sewn to their ends; steel wool or nylon fibres woven into their fabric. Some absorb a lot of water, whilst others are designed to hold very little water.

Window cleaning bucket

Window cleaning buckets are rectangular in shape to fit the window washer neatly into the bucket.

Glass scraper

This tool allows you to remove paint, stickers, decals and other materials from glass.

You should only purchase scrapers specifically designed for application on glass surfaces.

WARNING! Scratched glass is no laughing matter. Detailed glass scraping procedures are covered in Section 4 of this course.

A Towel (microfibre cloth) and/or sea sponge

You should remove excess water from a squeegee to avoid contaminating the clean glass. You can use a towel (normally microfiber cloth) or sea sponge to remove excess water and debris from squeegee rubber. Both are very useful.

The sea sponge has an advantage the towel doesn't. It can be wrung-out over and over. You'll need to replace your towel occasionally when it gets too wet to be effective.

There are advantages of both towels and sponges. The towel is nice to have draped over your tool belt to dry your hands before moving your extension ladder from window to window. It can also be used to dry squeegee rubber and dry window edges after squeegeeing.

Microfibre cloths have now mostly replaced conventional towels and sea sponges.

Microfibre cloths mop up vinyl window frames with ease. This is an important advantage when cleaning windows on store fronts and commercial buildings. Those clients like a little extra "Detailing" done to their windows to make their shop/building look presentable for their customers and occupants.

Tip: If you are planning to wipe window framework, do it after you've strip washed the glass and BEFORE you squeegee glass. Then, carefully sponge bottom exterior framework after squeegeeing.
2.5 Window cleaning detergent

Warning: With the wrong mix of chemicals used when cleaning a specific type of glass surface, a "homemade recipe" can cloud glass, damage treated glass and harm window surroundings i.e.. (window frames, caulking and paint).

The purpose of professional window cleaning detergent is to loosen dirt from glass and to keep glass wet and slippery long enough to squeegee entire surface. This requires a chemical that will hold water on glass; which is the necessary property soap provides. A properly formulated window cleaning detergent reduces the "surface tension" on the glass and allows the water to spread evenly across glass rather than creating water beading.

The squeegee rubber needs a wet and slippery surface only a professional window cleaning detergent can provide. The detergent keeps the glass surface wet long enough to finish squeegeeing a window.

A SLOW drying window cleaning solution that allows squeegee rubber to glide is necessary to achieve clean windows!

Professional window cleaning soaps are:

- Non-abrasive
- Environmentally friendly
- Containing no solvents, ammonia, or alkali
- Designed to clean and neutralise the P.H. of most window glass surfaces.

Whilst it is always recommended to use a properly designed window cleaning detergent for cleaning glass, many professional window cleaners use a high foaming dishwashing detergent such as "Morning Fresh".

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Note: Normal 'spray on' window clean detergents are designed for indoor use and are not recommended for cleaning exterior glass surfaces.

Watch the video
Section 3 – Perform window cleaning

When you finish this section you will have an understanding of the following concepts and ideas:

- Internal window cleaning – spot cleaning glass
- Washing and squeegeeing windows
- The 2 Stroke Window Cleaning Method
- The Fanning Squeegee Method
- Scraping window glass
- How to remove hard water stains and oxidization from glass
3.1 Internal window cleaning – spot cleaning glass

Spot cleaning glass is normally only used when cleaning internal glass windows and partitions and glass doors. Spot cleaning only requires visibly dirty spots and marks to be removed. The entire window or glass area is not cleaned.

The common types of soiling removed when spot cleaning glass include finger marks, food smudges e.g. ice cream and many other types of marking that occur through people contacting the surface over a period of time.

Spot cleaning internal windows and glass is normally performed with a conventional spray bottles filled with fast drying window cleaning detergent. The normal procedure for spot cleaning glass includes:

- Lightly spray dirty areas and smudges using a spray bottle filled with window cleaning detergent.
- Use a clean, dry, lint free cloth to clean and wipe and dry the glass surface.
- After you have systematically cleaned the glass, check you have removed all soiling by stepping back from the glass and looking at the surface from various angles.

3.2 Washing and squeegeeing windows

The 2 Stroke Window Cleaning Method

In this first video you'll learn how to cleaning glass using a basic "2 Stroke Window Cleaning Method". The 2 Stroke Method is a basic squeegeeing technique used for small windows. As you will see in the video, the squeegee takes 2 overlapping passes to clean glass.

You should try to use a squeegee channel length that will overlap into dry glass by approximately 3-5cm.

In the video, be aware the cleaner removes excess water from their squeegee's rubber before each pass with a microfiber cloth or towel. When they place the squeegee into the "Dry Line" for the final pass, it overlaps into dry, cleaned glass by approximately 5-10cm.

What is a dry line?

As you will see in the video, angle your squeegee to a vertical position at glass top so that only 3-5cm of squeegees rubber is in contact with glass. Move squeegee left to right to remove 3-5cm of solution from glass leaving a dry line. This technique is called a "Partial Squeegee".

If you are performing vertical strokes with your squeegee, a dry line at glass top will allow you to place your dry squeegee rubber edge into it. If you are performing horizontal strokes with your squeegee, a dry line at glass left edge will allow you to place your dry squeegee rubber edge into it. Starting from top left and squeegee across glass with no more than 1 overlapping stroke.

Tip: Squeegeeing from a ‘Dry Line’ will greatly reduce streaks

Should you wipe the window's edge after squeegeeing?

If you need to wipe dry around glass edges with a microfiber cloth make sure you leave the glass completely DRY! A disadvantage to towel drying edges is you are more likely to smear dirty water back onto the glass than you are to remove the small amount of water left by your squeegee.

Use a microfibre cloth or sea sponge to clean framework either before or after washing glass but, not after squeegeeing. Remember, squeegeeing is the final rinse. Once you've finished squeegeeing a window it's time to move to the next window.

Watch the video
3.3 Minimizing Streaks

A streak, generally speaking, is residue left on window glass after the process of cleaning is complete. Several factors cause streaks. Following are some suggestions to improve your window cleaning results.

- Make sure to wash glass until all visible residue has been dislodged. This requires the ability to "See Through" the soapy water to detect items like "Bug Juice" and, "Food Grease". Scrub these spots until dissolved.
- Make sure squeegee rubber is sharp, free of debris, and undamaged. Always remove debris from rubber before every pass with a clean microfibre cloth or sea sponge.
- Replace the squeegee rubber immediately if the edge is damaged. Examine rubber closely for hairline cracks or cuts and replace when needed,
- Squeegee with a consistent rubber-to-glass angle.
- Apply even pressure across squeegee and remove solution at a moderate to fast speed. A squeegee only requires a small amount of pressure on the glass surface.
- Try not to hesitate when the squeegee is in motion.
- If window glass is HOT, you might try using cold water in your solution. If the glass still shows signs of quick evaporation, (steaming), you will have to squeegee solution off glass before any noticeable dry spots appear. This means mastering the fanning squeegee technique covered in the next section.

3.4 The Fanning Squeegee Method

The Fanning method is the technique you will learn to use on all glass shapes of moderate to large size. The "Fanning" or the "S" method obtains its name because the squeegee makes an "S" shape, or multiple upside down "L" shapes as it makes its way down the surface of the glass.

Basically, it allows the window cleaner to clear all the solution on even the biggest window in one continuous motion.

The fanning method is very fast once you learn and practice the technique. As you can imagine, using this technique will reduce window cleaning time down to minutes instead of hours. It's a skill you'll need to acquire quickly if you are going to clean a lot of large exterior windows.

In this video, you'll see what it is like to clear a typical large window using the 'fanning technique'. CLICK HERE to learn the Fanning Squeegee Method.

Cleaning windows in direct sunlight

Yes! You CAN - clean glass in direct sunlight!

Glass exposed to direct sunlight is hot, and in turn, will dry your window cleaning solution quickly. If any detergent has a chance to dry on glass before you remove it with a squeegee, you will be left with streaks. This means you will need to develop speed into your window cleaning technique. The faster you can clear solution from hot glass - the better your results.

In the next video, "Fanning Application", you'll learn the super speed window cleaning techniques needed to clean a variety of glass shapes and sizes. Watch the video

Some of the "Real Life" examples are of glass that has been exposed to sunlight for hours. Again, without speed window cleaning techniques, this sun exposed glass will dry quickly after you've applied your solution and streak.

Watch the second video
3.5 Scraping window glass

In this section you will learn how to avoid scratching glass when using razor blades (glass scrapers) and chemicals to remove a variety of construction overspray items including decals, stickers and paint.

**The Do's and Don'ts of glass scraper use**

Before we can discuss techniques to remove debris from glass, we need to understand incorrect use of razors and glass scrapers can damage window glass.

Following a list of absolute Do's and Don'ts when scraping glass:

**DO:** Replace scraper blade when dull, worn or damaged. In order to prevent scratching glass, use a new replacement blade every time you need to use your scraper.

**DO:** ONLY USE a professional grade glass scraper.

**DO NOT** use a razor on DRY GLASS! It's absolutely mandatory to wet glass first with soapy water before using a scraper. The soapy water lubricates glass surface which greatly reduces your chance of scratching the glass.

**DO NOT** use a razor on "COATED" GLASS! If you have coated glass, i.e. (Mirrored or tinted), make sure the coating is NOT on the side the paint or overspray is on. Usually, glass is coated on one side only so, take a close look at your glass before you scrape.

**DO NOT** use a razor to remove mortar or concrete from glass.

**CAUTION!** Razor blades are extremely SHARP! Be careful, they can cut skin faster than a kitchen knife.

**How to safely remove decals and stickers**

To remove decals and stickers, use the same professional techniques you learned for paint removal. The one problem with using scrapers in this situation is, after you've removed the sticker or decal, a sticky glue residue may still be present on glass. This is when a "Degreaser" such as orange oil solvent should be used to remove the glue residue.

**STEP 1** - After decal has been removed with your scraper, use a degreaser, to remove glue left behind from decal.

**STEP 2** - Apply the degreaser with a clean, soft cloth and rub onto decal residue until glue dissolves.

**STEP 3** - Apply glass cleaning solution and squeegee off to finalize the cleaning process.

**TIP!** Follow the manufacturer's recommendations for use when using chemicals like degreasing agents. Acid resistant rubber gloves and safety goggles may be needed.

Warning! Degreasers can NOT be used on coated surfaces because the chemical may damage the coating.

Watch the video
3.6 Paint Removal Instructions

**STEP 1** - Fill a bucket with approximately the same ratio of (detergent; water) as you would to prepare a sink for dish washing.

**STEP 2** - With a window washer, apply detergent solution to the effected window glass to lubricate the glass surface. Add more window cleaning detergent to your water to increase slipperiness if needed.

**STEP 3** - Do a single stroke test, with your scraper, in a corner of the window to see how the glass will react to the razor. If you scratch the glass, STOP IMMEDIATELY, you will want to remove the paint with a 000 steel wool pad using the same glass lubricating methods as scraper use.

**STEP 4** - Scrap glass in "One Direction Only". Make sure to lift scraper after each pass - Try scraping (right to left, lift...) (right to left, lift...) until finished.

**What if paint is speckled over entire surface of glass?**

Scrap window's glass perimeter first by angling razor 45° away from window's framing. This will help prevent blade catching and scratching frame and caulking, and prevent breaking the blade.

Once perimeter is scraped, use overlapping horizontal or vertical strokes with razor to remove the body of paint on glass surface. Horizontal strokes work well with windows that are wider than they are tall and visa-versa for vertical strokes.

**CAUTION!** The "back stroke", or dragging the scraper back to it's starting point, is the most common moment you'll scratch glass. So, make sure to lift your scraper between passes.

It's also a good idea to remove debris from the scraper blade between passes with a towel or microfiber cloth. Be careful the blades are sharp.

**STEP 5** - Re-lubricate window if first scraper pass did not remove all the paint and re-scrap.

**STEP 6** - After surface area is completely free of paint, reapply glass cleaning solution and squeegee off to finalize the cleaning process. Repeat steps 1 through 6 on all effected windows.
Section 4 - Cleaning site and equipment

When you finish this section you will have an understanding of the following concepts and ideas:

- Clean up and restore the site
- Clean and store equipment, tools and consumables
4.1 Clean up and restore the site

Remove any 'drop sheets' or 'ground sheets' that were placed to a safe area where people will not trip over them.

Remove all protective coverings and dean-up any spills/soiling.

 Replace furnishings or any items that were moved initially to gain access to the site.

Window coverings i.e., curtains & blinds etc. are returned to their original position. This includes setting the angles for the blades on both vertical and Venetian blinds to their previous position.

'Dress' the area i.e., replace any items of furniture or equipment etc. that were moved so you could gain access to the area. Make sure they are relocated in their original position or as previously advised by your supervisor.

Clean and store equipment, tools and consumables

When you have finished cleaning you must clean your equipment according to manufacturer’s recommendations.

Cleaning and storing your equipment properly will:

- Help equipment last longer – for example damps mops and rot and fall apart.
- Prevent contamination by thoroughly cleaning and drying all equipment.
- Prevent the growth of bacteria by cleaning, storing and drying equipment properly.
- Reduces cost because equipment last longer.

Return all equipment, chemicals and PPE to your cleaners room and store all materials in an organised, accessible (easy to reach) manner.

Not only will items be easier to find but you will also reduce the risk of injury to yourself or others caused by poorly stored and dirty equipment.

4.2 Dispose of used chemical solutions

Once you have finished using a diluted chemical solution, dispose of it safely.

- Never pour it back into its original container. If you do this you may transfer soil and bacteria to the concentrated chemical.
- Some chemicals, such as detergents, can be poured down a cleaners sink. Others, which may be harmful to the environment, need special disposal. They may need to be bottled and sent to an approved location.
- Always read the Safety Data Sheet (SDS) or the manufacturer’s instructions before disposing of chemicals.
4.3 Prepare for the next shift

Prepare all of the equipment so that it is ready for the next shift. It should be clean and in working order so that there is no risk of safety or hygiene problems for yourself or for others.

Make sure you do the following:

- Check cleaning equipment and report any faults
- Check equipment is cleaned and stored properly
- Check chemical containers for cracks or leaks; make sure they are closed properly and that you can easily read chemical labels
- Dispose of waste chemicals, waste water and solid waste safely and according to company policy
- Always wash gloves in warm water and detergent, and rinse thoroughly before removing them. Take them off and place them where they can dry easily; and
- Always wash your hands well with detergent and warm water; rinse them in clean water and dry with a hand towel or hand dryer.