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## **CASE STUDY: Award-winning School District Cleans For Health**

Rolla Public School District, located in Rolla, Missouri, serves more than 4,000 students. The district has more than 700,000 square feet of school and office space that is maintained by 34 janitors.

Last year, the district was awarded the Silver Award for K-12 schools, sponsored by the Green Cleaning Network, the Healthy Schools Campaign, and a leading publication for the education industry.

In 1997 the district began what it calls the "Cleaning for Health" program. This was at a time when green cleaning was in its infancy but an appropriate time, according to the district, to start taking steps to help improve the health of its facilities and protect the students and staff that use them every day.

Among the steps the district took are the following:

- ~ Eliminated products with high volatile organic compounds (VOCs)
- ~ Installed high-performance matting systems to help reduce soil load in its facilities
- ~ Began reviewing all of the cleaning equipment used in the district, with the goal of selecting more environmentally responsible products
- ~ Developed a green statement policy, something that was way ahead of its time. The statement said that the district was committed to improving

the health of its facilities by using cleaning chemicals, tools, and equipment that were both effective and protective of the environment.

According to Dr. Aaron Zalis, superintendent for Rolla Public Schools, the greening of the district's facilities was a slow process that included many changes and several steps evolving over many years. It included such things as:

- ~ Using green cleaning products (products certified as environmentally preferable by leading certification organizations)
- ~ Implementing cleaning procedures and practices that are recognized as part of an effective green cleaning program
- ~ Selecting recycled paper and plastic products
- ~ Implementing a Day Cleaning program (energy savings have been realized when facilities are cleaned during the day)

~ Selecting cleaning equipment that helps protect the indoor environment

Eventually the district was rewarded for all the work, time, and energy it had put into the program.

Tornado, makers of professional cleaning equipment, is proud to have helped the Rolla Public Schools win this prestigious award. The district selected three machines manufactured by Tornado that are designed to have less impact on the environment and/or be more sustainable.

These include:

~ An upright vacuum cleaner that has earned the Carpet and Rug Institute's Seal of Approval because, among other things, its true-HEPA filtration system is designed to trap and contain fine particulates and dust, helping to improve indoor air quality and reduce the redistribution of potentially harmful particles and allergens into the air;

~ A backpack vacuum cleaner, which also has a HEPA filtration system and is exceptionally quiet - making it perfect for the district's day cleaning program;

~ A compact scrubber, that uses cylindrical brushes, which make it exceptionally effective at cleaning porous, grouted and uneven floors. However, tests indicate it uses less water and chemical than conventional rotary systems, making it more sustainable and environmentally responsible as well.

We chose our [cleaning] equipment carefully, says Christopher Headrick, custodial supervisor for Rolla Public Schools, making sure it provided excellent productivity, quiet operation, and the environmental features we were looking for as part of our green cleaning program.