

## Why Are We So Keen On Green Clean Legislation for Schools?

**Green cleaning uses effective cleaning practices that have minimal impacts on human health and the environment. In Connecticut, environmentally preferable products certified by an independent third-party organization (such as Green Seal or EcoLogo) must be procured and used in state owned buildings. CT State Vocational Technical Schools must comply with this law, but all other elementary and secondary schools are not included.**

### WHY IS THIS A PROBLEM?

- The US EPA has consistently ranked indoor pollution among the top five environmental risks to public health.
- Toxic cleaning products can significantly contribute to indoor air pollution in schools.
- Children's size, increased metabolic rates and developing organ systems make them much more vulnerable to exposures to toxic cleaning chemicals.
- Recent studies link cleaning chemicals to elevated asthma rates among teachers, teachers' aides and school custodians.
- NIOSH attributes 12% of occupational asthma cases to exposure to cleaning chemicals.
- Some Connecticut schools continue to use toxic cleaning chemicals even as safer, effective and affordable alternatives are readily available.
- Other CT school districts who claim to be using "green cleaning" are not using products certified by an independent third-party and have not been using best cleaning practices advocated by experts and scientific research.

### WHAT IS THE SOLUTION?

All CT public schools have been required to adopt and implement an indoor air quality program since 2003. Legislation that would require incorporating a green clean program into an indoor air quality committee's management plan will make schools greener, cleaner and healthier places to learn and work. To be effective, this Green Cleaning program must require that:

- Schools procure and use environmentally preferable products certified by an independent third-party organization (such as Green Seal or EcoLogo). These are the products currently required for state owned buildings.
- School facilities managers and cleaning personnel be trained or retrained in proper product application, mixing, dilution and disposal. Free training is currently available.
- Schools report on actions taken to adopt and implement their Green Clean program when they report on the status of their indoor air quality program
- Schools annually notify parents, guardians and staff with a written Green Cleaning Policy at the same time that they notify in writing about the pesticide usage policy.

**Help us to make CT the next state after New York and Illinois to pass legislation that requires elementary and secondary schools to use safer, more effective cleaning products and procedures in place of harmful, toxic chemicals and inefficient, costly methods.**

The CT Foundation for Environmentally Safe Schools 888-420-5536 [www.pollutionfreeschools.org](http://www.pollutionfreeschools.org)  
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