



Healthy Buildings for Healthy People

Excellence in Quality Assurance and O&M Practices

Abstract

The growing competitive environment to recruit and to retain talent in the workforce is constantly challenging organizations to maintain optimal workplace environments to ensure they are an employer of choice. Today, potential and existing employees are attracted by a variety of amenities; however, they also seek employers that demonstrate a commitment to providing a healthy and productive environment. One of the areas that many organizations focus on is Operations and Maintenance (O&M). Whether self-performed or outsourced, organizations seek a balance between cost and ensuring an optimal and healthy workplace. This white paper analyzes the influence that sound Quality Assurance practices in Operations & Maintenance have on the built environment and an organizations productivity.

Problem Statement

Today's working professional spends a significant amount of their day in their place of employment. These environments have a significant impact on the health, wellbeing and productivity of employees, guests and visitors. Interior environmental deficiencies that include; inconsistently cleaned spaces, spills, dust, pests, lighting or temperature and humidity variations are distractions that negatively impact the workplace experience. When buildings are healthier, so are we. Statistics as revealed here have shown that a clean, comfortable and healthy workplace can improve your employee productivity and cognitive benefits while lowering instances of maladies and complaints. Ensuring an optimal and healthier indoor environment through effective Quality Assurance practices within Operations & Maintenance services will also enhance employee morale and have a positive effect on healthcare premiums and liability.

“At the end of each day, the team asked workers to complete cognitive-function assessments in nine key areas, including crisis response, decision making, and strategy. “We saw pretty dramatic effects,” he reports: workers in optimized environments scored 131 percent better in crisis-response questions, 299 percent better on information usage, and 288 percent higher in strategy.

The same report also shows the benefits of a strong janitorial program. In the section called “How Does Clean Equal Green?”, the report conveys that a solid janitorial program can reduce:

- The probability of catching common cold/influenza by 80%
- The number of surfaces contaminated by viruses by 62%
- Absenteeism by 46%

The report goes on to say that “janitorial has a very real and measurable value” with a productivity gain potential of 2-8%. In a 100-person office where an average salary is \$25,000, that can lead to \$125,000 in savings.



Paul Saccone, CEO, Able Services:

“Quality assurance is a way of doing business, not simply a program. It requires partnership, effort and a continuing commitment on behalf of our management, and employees all throughout the enterprise.”

Findings

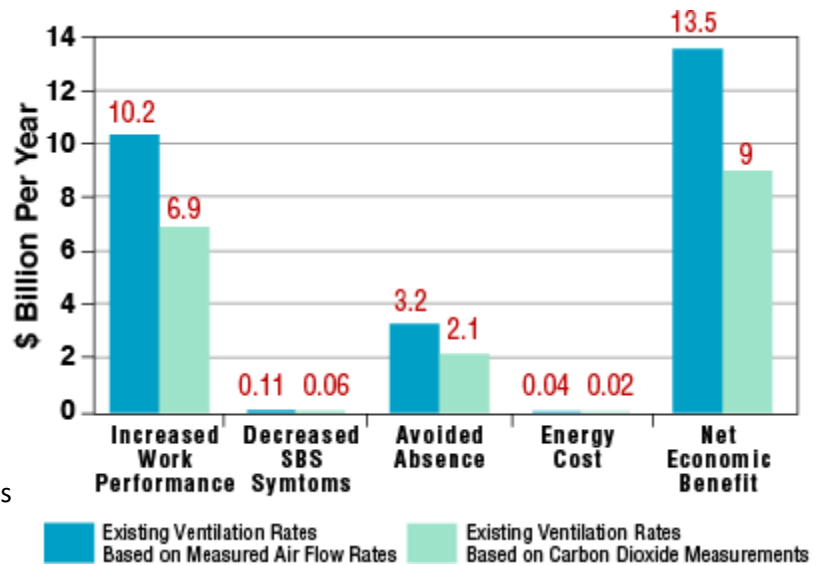
These findings emphasize the importance and the value of healthy buildings for healthy people, but the key aspect for any successful program is to continuously improve the “real” to the “ideal”. The cornerstone of any organizations O&M and janitorial program whether outsourced or self-performed is a robust quality assurance and control process which includes, continuous data collection and analytics, performing trend analyses and developing key action plans, while constantly striving for that ideal result.

Ultimately, reliable quality assurance programs are supported by robust data and analytics. The utilization of real time data and analytics with actionable intelligence will ensure your efforts to provide a comfortable and productive workplace environment for your occupants. In respect to the adage “you can’t manage what you don’t measure.” Unless you measure something, you don’t know if it’s getting better or worse highlighting the importance of using data to confirm beliefs about which management strategies and practices are working and which are not.

Conclusion

Research has shown that there is indeed a direct connection between a clean and healthy work environment and worker productivity levels. The potential economic benefits from improved work performance in higher-quality, indoor environments can result in considerable savings in productivity. According to some research findings by the Berkeley Lab, the annual benefits of increasing ventilation rates across 100 U.S. offices to 32 cfm per person based on measured air flow rates were:

- A 1.1% average increase in work performance in 12.4 million employees
- A 18.8% decrease in unhealthy building symptoms
- 10 million days of avoided absence, as shown on the graphic here:



Companies may be experiencing low employee productivity due to a less than acceptable work environment without realizing it. A clean and healthy work place can have a substantial impact on their employees’ productivity and can reduce their company’s health related costs at the same time. It stands to reason that a poor work environment means poor employee output. Effective O&M procedures are fundamentally important to protect the investment in, and “healthy” performance of all building systems. Employee health and productivity can suffer when building systems fail to operate as designed. With the proper janitorial and O&M regiment, procedures, and quality control principals in place, organizations save money, improve their bottom line and retain the best and the brightest.

About Able Services

Established in 1926, Able Services provides facility services across the country in 42 states with over 17,000 employees and 3,000 clients. Able Services executes work in a variety of environments, from hospitals to data centers, from universities to Fortune 100 corporate headquarters, from Los Angeles to Boston, and all points in between. Through their industry leading O&M programs, Able Services works to protect and preserve client facilities and building assets, while improving occupant satisfaction and productivity.

For over 90 years, Able Service has demonstrated superior facility services in over 1.3 billion square feet across the United States. Its leading-edge program ensures consistent delivery across all environments, both union and non-union, ensuring the finest workplace environment. To enhance their program, Able Services’ team of subject matter experts have further developed healthy building O&M programs to manage clients’ building systems, address indoor environmental quality and prevent reoccurring service failures through the application of Lean Six Sigma and comprehensive data and analytics.

Able Services is a member of ISSA, The Worldwide Janitorial Industry Association and uses ISSA’s intensive, six-dimension Janitorial Industry Management Standard (CIMS) as the conveyance format for its entire janitorial program, including the latest section on green janitorial. For its commitment to providing industry-leading janitorial programs, Able Services was awarded ISSA’s coveted CIMS-GB (Green Building) certification, which places Able Services in the top 1% of all janitorial service providers.