

A Rapid Shift: Green Cleaning Mandates for Schools Are on the Rise



Background and Methods

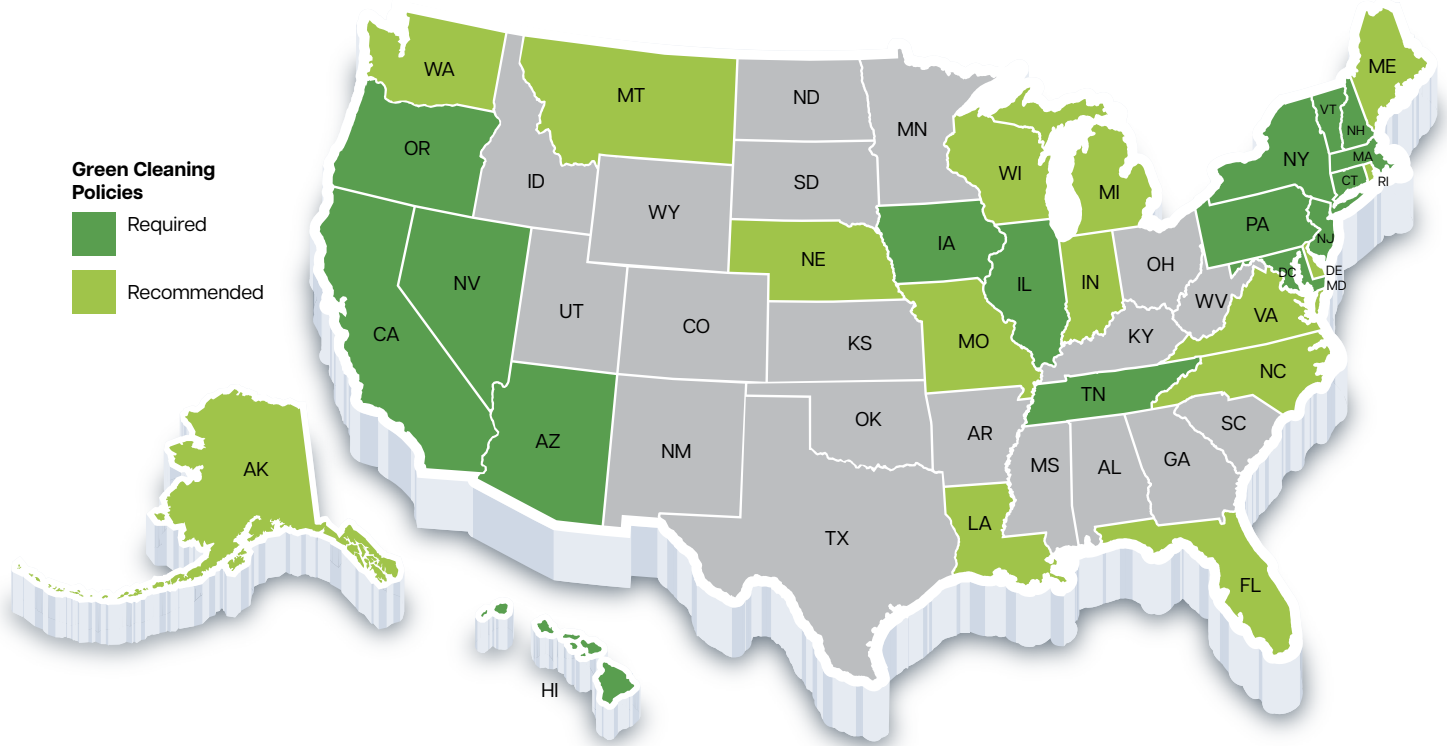
Cleaning and disinfecting schools is important to remove germs, dirt, and allergens from surfaces. Adopting a green cleaning policy, or eco-conscious practice, can accomplish these tasks by using products with naturally derived ingredients to help create safe and healthy school environments. Many school staff prefer to use eco-conscious products, and state and local governments also see the value in choosing eco-conscious options.

In this study, we assessed how many states have enacted or recommended eco-conscious or green cleaning policies and identified the specific cleaning practices they recommend for schools. We also compared how the laws and recommendations have changed in the past 4 years, following up on our [study](#) published in 2022¹.

31 States Require or Recommend Green Cleaning Policies for Schools

Green Cleaning Requirements and Recommendations Have More Than Doubled Since 2022

In 2022, 15 states either required or recommended that schools implement a green cleaning policy. Now in 2026, 18 states require schools to implement green cleaning policies and an additional 13 states strongly recommend schools use green cleaning practices. The remaining 19 states have issued no guidance and leave the policies up to local districts and officials to determine cleaning practices. In total, 31 states now recommend or require green cleaning policies. This represents nearly double the number of states with such policies in our previous analysis.



Green Cleaning Policies Often Require Using Eco-conscious Products

There is significant variability among green cleaning policies and the types of products to use:

1. Policies that vaguely require the use of a “green cleaning product” without defining the term.
2. Policies that provide some descriptions of green cleaning product features, such as improved safety features for students and janitors, or improved environmental footprints.
3. Policies that provide highly specific requirements or specific third-party certified products including EPA Safer Choice, EPA Design for the Environment, Green Seal, and Ecologo. 7 states specifically require third-party certifications: Rhode Island, Oregon, Hawaii, Connecticut, California, Maine, and Missouri.

Regardless of the requirements listed in the laws and recommendations, products certified EPA Safer Choice and EPA Design for the Environment meet the criteria listed in green cleaning policies broadly and are a good choice for any school subject to a green cleaning requirement.

Conclusions and Recommendations

All schools can benefit from switching to third-party certified eco-conscious products. We recommend looking for EPA Safer Choice and EPA Design for the Environment certified products to replace commonly used all-purpose cleaners, glass cleaners, daily disinfecting sprays, and disinfecting wipes. Doing this will ensure your cleaning team is compliant with relevant legislation and demonstrates your commitment to making eco-conscious changes in your cleaning practice.

References:

1. CloroxPro Study Summary. A Primer on Sustainability Policies for Government and Educational Institutions in the United States that Impact Cleaning and Disinfection Programs. <https://www.cloroxpro.com/resource-center/sustainability-policies-for-cleaning-and-disinfection-programs/>
2. EPA Safer Choice <https://www.epa.gov/saferchoice>



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