

When Going Green, A Team Effort Makes Real Change

By Mike Sawchuk

This is exactly the approach taken by Sean Griffin, research coordinator for the nonprofit organization ToxicFree Canada. This organization works with public and private facilities, including schools and universities, to help make them greener and healthier. More specifically, their activities have helped school districts such as the Burnaby School District, made up of 33 elementary, 7 community, and 8 secondary schools, incorporate green cleaning.

"When we first meet with custodians and operations managers, they often tell us that they are very happy with their cleaning products and do not want to make a change," says Griffin. "Then we ask to see the MSDS sheets on the [conventional] chemicals they are using and point out the ingredients that can be harmful, many even carcinogenic."

Griffin says that once the cleaning workers know that transferring to green cleaning products is for the benefit of their health, as well as that of students, staff, and the environment, the doors open and resistance begins to fade away. However, concerns may still exist about the effectiveness of the cleaning products, and this issue can only be addressed by allowing the cleaning professionals to try different green cleaning brands.

"We call this the green cleaning challenge," says Mike Sawchuk, vice president of **Enviro-Solutions**, a leading manufacturer of green cleaning chemicals which provides the green products for Burnaby School District (and a sponsor of *The Quick & Easy Guide*). "Not only are the custodians testing the green cleaning

