

Greener cleaning is way forward

Environmental awareness holds the key to successful cleaning contracts.

Gone are the days when public and private sector organisations selected cleaning contractors on price alone without a care for the environment. Cost is still paramount but more and more organisations are opting for cleaning contractors that put the environment first.

The shift in emphasis means contractors can no longer rely on competitive pricing and good service. They must also demonstrate innovation and environmental know-how if they are to secure and retain business, and add real value to clients.

Terry Chance, Technical Director for The Quarr Group's cleaning subsidiary NViro, says public sector organisations are more environmentally aware than ever when it comes to appointing cleaning contractors. "There is no doubt whatsoever local authorities are moving towards companies that have the environment at heart. The Government has set statutory targets for recycling and composting at 30% and local authorities are looking for companies that can help them meet these targets."

NViro gets green light

NViro is leading the way in the development and implementation of environment focused cleaning and disposal. It is one of the few if not the only commercial cleaning company on the South Coast to be awarded the ISO14001 Environment Management status. This recognises NViro's approach to managing its impact on the environment, which the contractor does in several ways:

- **At least 90% of NViro's cleaning products are biodegradable**
- **NViro and its suppliers source the most energy efficient machinery**
- **NViro operates a waste recycling scheme and helps clients develop their own**
- **NViro promotes the use of shared vehicles and closely monitors business mileage**

NViro's environmental policy is already making a big difference. "With ISO14001 in place we are being asked to quote for more and more work. We are finding that the environment is of growing interest and importance when pre-qualifying for tenders and the ISO14001 sets out to clients how we approach our environmental responsibility," explains Terry Chance.

From desk to waste disposal

The ISO14001 award was a key factor when NViro won the recent contract to supply cleaning services to The London Borough of Sutton (see page 1) and NViro's proactive approach to environmental issues is also paying dividends at Brighton & Hove City Council.

Prior to appointing NViro, the Council ran several disparate recycling schemes at its main offices on Hove seafront. On winning the contract to clean the Council's buildings, NViro conducted a recycling survey. Based on the findings, the cleaning company brought the separate initiatives together and developed a new scheme for managing the recycling process from 'waste bin to waste pick-up'.

Danny Meehan, Facilities Support Manager, Brighton & Hove City Council, says: "Brighton & Hove Council is a progressive council, especially on environmental issues, but we could not have carried out the improvements that we have done without NViro.

"We have massively increased the amount of recycling; it has gone up by 200% and that's just paper recycling. We are now looking to roll the scheme out to other buildings." Describing NViro's approach, he adds: "They are very encouraging. They are always coming up with ideas and they live up to their ISO14001 status."

Recycling initiatives are also being developed with Chichester College, where NViro is heavily involved in a recycling bin scheme to encouraging students to recycle college waste.

With the environment becoming an ever hotter issue in business, it can't be long before private sector organisations follow suit.