



Sustainable and cost-efficient changes lead the way at Duke University

In this challenging economy and with budget cuts all too common, Higher Education Facility Managers truly understand what it means to "do more with less." What you need are products that can save you labor time and costs, and that can allow you to increase efficiencies within your department.

The case of Duke University

Duke University was looking for a way to answer student complaints about the quality of toilet paper in its washrooms, while keeping costs down. "The move is being made because the current tissue is one-ply tissue," said Albert Scott, director of grounds, housekeeping, sanitation and recycling services. Scott acknowledged that there was a need for change, but had no explanation for why one-ply paper was currently being used.

Besides product costs, Scott took other factors into consideration in order to determine which toilet paper to purchase. After quality, texture and softness of the paper, environmentally-friendly products are given preference, and students agree it's an important consideration.

Survey says:

According to the Princeton Review's 2013 *College Hopes & Worries Survey*, 62% of respondents indicated that having access to information about a college's commitment to environmental issues would contribute to their decision to apply or attend a school¹. The Princeton Review also publishes, every April, a report titled *The Princeton Review Guide to Green Colleges*, which rates more than 700 Colleges with Green Rating Scores².

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Student quote

"I would like my toilet paper to be of good quality," junior Joi McLaughlin said. "I approve of them trying to fix the problem as long as it's good for the environment and not harmful in any other way."

Making the move to two-ply tissue

While it is common knowledge that one-ply paper tends to run cheaper than two-ply, in terms of usage, people end up using roughly the same amount of sheets in the end. According to Scott, in addition to being a better quality, purchasing two-ply paper doesn't change much in terms of costs. The new two-ply rolls have about 1,000 feet of paper (versus 800 feet for the one-ply rolls), and cost less than .001 cents more per foot.

"Typically, people will end up using more tissue with one-ply than two-ply," Scott said. "This change will help save toilet paper." Add to that the fact that numerous students have complained about the quality of the one-ply paper, and you quickly see that the move to two-ply paper will be more cost effective and provide a better quality paper for Duke students, facility, and staff.

On top of switching to two-ply toilet paper, Duke University will also benefit from other sustainable savings from a change in paper towels. The university has decided to start using hands-free dispensers from now on. According to Scott, the new paper towels and dispensers could reduce the paper use in academic facilities by 20 to 30 percent. Because the new dispensers require no touching to deliver a paper towel, this will eliminate the temptation to just grab a handful of multi-fold paper towels, discarding unused pieces in the trash.

Product	Multifold	800' Roll Towel
Hand drys/case	1,778	2,880
Cost/case	\$26.00	\$32.00
Cost/1000 hand drys	\$14.63	\$11.11
Potential Cost Savings		32%

Cost/case for comparative purposes only.

Conclusion

Colleges and Universities who select the right products can not only increase efficiencies and cost-savings, but they can also better answer student expectations and experience with their institution.

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¹ Princeton Review's 2013 College Hopes & Worries Survey (www.princetonreview.com)

²The Princeton Review Guide to Green Colleges (<http://www.princetonreview.com/greenguide.aspx>)