

To Whom It May Concern,

The custodial staff at Royal Roads University (RRU) have undertaken numerous innovative sustainability initiatives. This occurred following an incident in which one staff member had a severe allergic reaction to one of the cleaning products that was being used. This led to numerous staff-driven improvements to the custodial practices and programs on campus including chemical-free cleaning and waste diversion.

The chemical-free cleaning program is well established, having been implemented in 2000, and guides the specific chemical-free cleaning practices that are conducted on campus. The method of disinfection of surfaces is filtration by applying microfiber clothes rather than sanitation using harsh chemicals. Cleaning with microfiber clothes has been proven to be as effective and using disinfecting chemicals and is a safer and more sustainable option. To further improve practices, there is a color-coding system in which staff separate the clothes used for urinals and toilets from those used for counters, sinks, and doorknobs; and from those used for windows and mirrors. The removal of harsh chemicals from day-to-day cleaning practices has improved indoor air quality and increased the safety of staff, faculty, students, and visitors on campus. Other institutions have been inspired by the custodial practices at RRU, including Algonquin College who had their facilities manager fly to RRU to observe the microfiber system and later implement it at that institution. This innovation in green-cleaning has not been claimed in previous STARS assessments; although, it has been recognized by the Canadian Association of University Business Officers (CAUBO) in 2005.

Another major innovative initiative taken on by the custodial staff was a shift to sustainable waste management. Improvements were made that resulting in diversion of a large volume of garbage to the local landfill. Composting practices include both outsourcing to local companies and on-campus activities and allow for sustainable disposal of food waste, yard-waste, and paper towel. One former student was inspired by the volume of paper towel waste that was being diverted that they implemented the same practices at the University of Alberta when she returned home. Although there are STARS credits consider waste diversion and composting; improvements in waste management on campus have significantly assisted RRU with shifting toward sustainable operations. The waste management program at RRU was recognized by Eco-Star in 2005 and has been continually improved upon since that time.

I, Darren Gardhan, affirm that this information is correct and is applicable for this STARS innovation credit.

Signature: Darren Gardhan Date: 1 Aug 2013

Darren Gardhan  
Supervisor – Custodial/Housekeeping Services