

How to lift condominium sales

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By [Mike Sawchuk](#)

A husband and wife were looking at condominiums for sale. They had seen more than 20 units before they finally found one they really wanted. The price was right, the kitchen was terrific, it had great views and the rooms were all generously sized.

With smiles on their face, they left the unit excited that their condo search was over but that only lasted about a minute. Once their elevator arrived, they stepped inside and notice some things that turned those smiles into frowns almost instantly.

This was a different elevator than the one that brought them up to the unit for sale. That one was clean and attractive. This one, although the same style and design, was dirty, had fingerprints on the stainless steel, especially around the control panel, there was an odor in the cab, and the carpets needed both vacuuming and spoting.

When a buyer is looking to purchase a new condo unit, they look at everything before making their decision from the unit itself to the way the facility is maintained inside and out. And one thing not up to par, such as a soiled elevator, can ruin the whole deal. This is why condo managers must always remember that proper facility maintenance involves all public areas of the building, including the elevators.

Elevator rush hour cleaning

To properly maintain an elevator typically requires about 40 minutes per day. In a large condominium building or one with considerable foot traffic, the elevators should be cleaned thoroughly once per day, which may take about 20 minutes, and then spot cleaned as needed one to three times per day. For a lightly used elevator, once per day may suffice.

Timing is critical. The rush hours for condo elevators are early in the morning until about 10 a.m., and then again in the evening from about 5 to 7 p.m. This means the more thorough, detailed cleaning of the elevator should be completed somewhere in the middle of the day, after the morning rush and before the evening return

of tenants. Spot cleanings are best performed before and after these busy periods.

Spot cleaning is typically very quick and straightforward. Any trash or debris on the elevator floor should be collected, the carpets vacuumed and control panel cleaned. Cleaning the control panel is very important.

We now know that a critical source of cross contamination in public facilities is the floor buttons on elevator control panels along with hand railings, if present. Because of this, maintenance crews are encouraged to use a heavy duty cleaner and a disinfectant.

Thorough elevator cleaning

The first step in beginning the more thorough elevator cleaning of the day is to shut down the elevator entirely. This allows the custodial worker to do his or her job uninterrupted and protects building users from inhaling contaminants that may become airborne during the cleaning.

With the elevator turned off, custodial workers should:

- Vacuum vents.
- Check that lights are working properly.
- Pick up debris.
- Wipe panels clean working from the bottom up to keep cleaning agents from staining the carpet.
- Stainless steel cleaners and polishes should be used on the stainless steel.
- Clean and then disinfect the control panel, floor buttons and railings.
- Vacuum the floor carpet and spot as needed; sweep and damp mop hard-surface floors. Remember to always use a clean mop. A soiled mop can spread contaminants and leave a malodor in the elevator cab.
- Vacuum (do not sweep) the elevator door tracks.
- Clean elevator doors with an all-purpose cleaner or stainless steel cleaner as applies.

A final thought on chemicals


Although most elevators have some sort of ventilation system, it is typically fairly limited. As a result, odors in the cab can be a problem. And one of the most common odors is from the chemicals used, which can also become a health risk.

Managers and custodial workers are encouraged to use environmentally preferable (Green Certified) cleaners when cleaning the interiors of elevators. These cleaners, when properly diluted and applied, will have a significantly reduced impact on the environment and are especially helpful in small, tight areas such as elevator cabs.

Look for proven-Green cleaning products. These products are tested and certified by leading organizations such as EcoLogo in Canada.

Fortunately, there are Green-certified equivalents of virtually all conventional cleaners used to maintain elevators from the stainless steel cleaners and polishes to the disinfectants. These products have been tested and evaluated to keep all areas, clean, healthy and attractive.

Mike Sawchuk is vice president of sales and marketing for Enviro-Solutions and Charlotte Products, both manufacturers of professional, environmentally responsible cleaning products.



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