

## TENNESSEE SUSTAINABLE HOSPITALITY

# The Crash Pad

## Chattanooga, TN | Lodging

The Crash Pad is a hostel located in Chattanooga, Tennessee. The building is LEED Platinum Certified and was the first hostel in the world to receive this level of certification from the US Green Business Council. The Crash Pad is dedicated to sustainability – one of their core values is to “be environmentally responsible by closely monitoring and actively pursuing ways to minimize [their] impact.” Among other initiatives, The Crash Pad has a green roof, solar panels, practices water conservation strategies including installing low-flow fixtures, and educates guests about sustainability initiatives through plaques located throughout the hostel. To support their community, The Crash Pad provides local goods including coffee, bread and pastries, beer and soap to guests. One of The Crash Pad’s sustainability initiatives is a green cleaning policy which outlines hygiene and cleaning practices that reduce environmental impact and promote the health and safety of guests and staff.



### GREEN CLEANING POLICY

The first step to implementing green cleaning practices is to develop a policy and set of standards that outline how green cleaning will be accomplished. The Crash Pad has a robust “Green Cleaning Policy and Program Standards,” effective as of July 2011, through their contractor that establishes guidelines and sets standards for how cleaning The Crash Pad will be accomplished in a way that minimizes environmental impact and promotes health and safety of staff and guests. The major sections of the policy include goals, responsible parties, quality assurance control processes, cleaning products, cleaning equipment, hard-floor and carpet maintenance, entryway systems, hand hygiene, handling and storage of cleaning chemicals, use of chemical concentrates and dilution systems, vulnerable building occupants, staffing and training, and occupant feedback and evaluation of new technologies. The plan is multi-faceted and addresses many aspects of green cleaning.



The green cleaning policy relies on existing standards and protocols to inform procedures and products selected for use. Some of these existing standards and protocols include the US Green Business Council’s [EQc3.3](#) (“Green Cleaning – Purchase of Sustainable Cleaning Products Criteria”) utilized in LEED certification, the [Green Seal](#) list of approved products and the Carpet and Rug Institute’s [Green Label](#).

JULY 2021

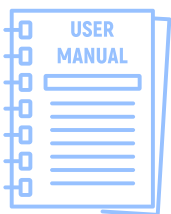
The policy specifically mentions protecting vulnerable building occupants, including “pregnant women, children, asthmatics, elderly occupants, individuals with allergies, highly sensitive individuals and cleaning staff.” Strategies to protect these individuals include to use low or no volatile organic compound (VOC) cleaning products, cleaning after hours when most occupants have left the building, and cleaning regularly to reduce the presence of potential irritants.

## CLEANING PRODUCTS



An important piece of the green cleaning policy is the section that outlines which cleaning products will be purchased and used on-site for hygiene practices and cleaning. The Crash Pad’s green cleaning policy strives for 60% compliance, based on cost, with the preferred products. Generally, the products included in the policy are those that are certified as environmentally preferred based on composition of the product, manufacturing processes, and the health and safety of humans. For example, the policy states that cleaning products including general purpose, bathroom, glass and carpet cleaners should be Green Seal certified. In another category, disinfectants, metal polish, floor finishes and strippers should be certified by Green Seal or ECOLOGO or meet maximum allowable VOC levels to reduce the risks associated with these products. In other circumstances, such as for hard floor cleaning, the policy is designed to use few or no chemicals and instead promotes practices such as dry mopping, vacuuming, and spot cleaning.

## COMMUNICATION & EDUCATION



Critical to the success of a green cleaning policy is to inform and educate staff about the policy, including important safety considerations. The policy states that all personnel involved in cleaning and sanitation practices will receive regular training that will cover topics including potential hazards, how to properly dispose of or recycle cleaning chemicals, and dispensing equipment and packaging of materials. To minimize risks associated with these activities, all staff are trained on all topics regardless of their specific duties. The policy requires that all staff receive at minimum 15 hours of training each year. Eligible training activities include reviewing the Green Cleaning Policy and Program Standards document, reviewing eligible cleaning products (for example, those that are Green Seal compliant), reviewing chemical hazard communications or Material Safety Data Sheets, and learning about ergonomic precautions and proper lifting techniques.