

Hospitality Hazards

The critical safety and maintenance items that are often overlooked can have an impact on guest satisfaction.

By: Victor Hayes Popovics

In the hospitality and recreation industry, keeping high traffic common areas neat, clean and safe is paramount.

This includes driveways, parking lots, entrances, lobbies, hallways, sidewalks and recreation facilities like pools, tennis courts and golf courses ... not to mention equipment and supplies related thereto.

Then there is the building itself.

All told, such maintenance can be far easier said than done.

What To Clean

Beyond the sheer size and scale of this endeavor, keeping floor spaces clean and safe is even more challenging amid the myriad of construction and design materials — Quartz, Granite, Marble, Slate, Terrazzo, Travertine, coral rock, brick, wood, carpet and rugs, just to name a few.

Walkways and decks aside, some structural areas and features on a building are also more challenging to clean than others — particularly on the exterior where the elements, insects, animals and even mold can wreak havoc — but are equally mission critical.

Rest assured if a location has subtle stains or degradation on the ground surfaces, or on the structure's interior or exterior walls or rooftops, it will be noticed by the guest if even subconsciously.

This poor impression will have negative implications for this guest who may cut a stay short and never return as well as the lost referral business revenue opportunity.

Procuring Power

With this in mind, facilities are increasingly

procuring their own professional pressure washing equipment for its multitude of uses and benefits that deliver rapid return on investment.

Consider these key ways a professional power washer can greatly benefit a hospitality or recreation operation:

- **Aesthetics:** You only get one chance

to make a first impression and nothing degrades a visitor's opinion of a location quicker than soiled, unkempt spaces.

- **Safety:** Slips and falls on algae covered sidewalks happen all too often, and the liabilities can be significant. Sidewalks or common areas that don't receive much sunlight are prone to moss and other life



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Sidewalks or other surfaces that don't receive sunlight are prone to moss and algae buildup that can cause slip and fall hazards and appearance concerns.

forms growing on them and the slippery surfaces are potential hazards.

- **Structural integrity:** Over time, lichen, moss, algae and other natural elements can degrade even the hardest of surfaces, so keeping them clear and clean can maintain their longevity.

- **Property value:** Cobwebs, dirt, leaves and pollen, not to mention wood rot and rust around gutters and grimy tile, can make a property look old, worn, dingy and appraise for less than it's actually worth.

Additional Uses

Even beyond keeping ground surface areas, walls and rooftops in tidy, tip-top shape, here's a list of additional issues where a professional power washer can greatly benefit a hospitality or recreation facility:

- **Clogged drains:** There's no need to call a plumber and pay to have a drain line cleared. A pressure washer can accomplish the same task. A special "sewer jetter" nozzle attachment will safely and efficiently unclog and clean a drain.

- **Grime-covered grout and tile:** A rotary brush attachment on a power washer is useful for safely cleaning floor tile and grout without damage. Use hot water to clean areas where grease and oil stains need to be cleared out, such as a food space or where cars are commonly parked.

- **Dirty windows:** While dirty windows reflect negatively on a hospitality facility, squeegee attachments make window cleaning quick and easy. You can use them

with soap and water or glass cleaner; either way you will have a sparkling clean window in half the time it would take with a cloth.

- **Dusty central air ducts:** Calling on a professional to clean central air conditioning ducts, or purchasing an air duct cleaning system, can be expensive and unnecessary. A pressure washer outfitted with a special attachment can get the job done and provide cost savings.

- **Kitchen exhaust duct and food safety:** Duct cleaning in restaurants is very important for many reasons with fire prevention at the top of the list. Many flammable contaminants, including oil, grease and dust, find their way into the exhaust ducts. Even a small spark, flame or just heat buildup could be enough to start a catastrophic fire. Clogged ducts can affect temperatures of the cooking surfaces, making them irregular and causing some foods to be undercooked. Heat could also build up in the kitchen, bringing chilled food ingredients up to dangerous temperatures where they could be susceptible to mold, fungus and bacteria.

- **Cluttered gutters:** Unclogged and functional gutters are imperative to prevent water overflow. Clogged gutters can detach, and worse, promote rot and rust to the surrounding structure. While a standard garden hose won't get the job done, a pressure washer with a special gutter nozzle will clear the dirt, leaves and debris in short order.

- **Regular equipment maintenance:** Golf course and tennis court equipment rep-

resents a unique cleaning challenge that power washers readily solve. There is a veritable cornucopia of detritus attributable to the inordinate amount of foot traffic of these spaces, including grease, oil, grime, dust, dirt, mud and the random items left by stray dogs, birds and critters. Visitors to these locals can be a finicky lot and expect not only the course to be impeccable, but they also expect the equipment to be clean.

- **Water and muck removal:** In regions where rain and snow create a buildup of water and muck, or when pooled water needs to be drained indoors perhaps from an overfilled planter, flood or plumbing repair, a special attachment provides high-volume water removal. This rapid response can prevent costly moisture-related damage.

- **Quick dry:** After pressure cleaning or moisture removal from an area, it can be quickly dried. Also, after better preparing a surface for foot traffic and keeping it safe from slips and falls, an air blower attachment will help you quickly dry out the space.

A pressure washer is an extremely versatile and easy-to-use tool that can make hospitality and recreation facility safety, cleaning and maintenance a breeze. *CM*

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