

BSC Services Dramatically Improves Restroom Maintenance at DIA

The Problem

The high-traffic restrooms at Denver International Airport were difficult to maintain. BG Services, the building service contractor at DIA, tried numerous approaches including acrylics, sealers, and UV-based urethane finishes. None were up to the task.

The Solution

GlossTek 100, the ultra-durable urethane floor finish from Ecolab, provided a scratch-resistant finish that stands up to urine, as well as all of DIA's traffic, dramatically reducing the time and effort to maintain the floors.

"The terrazzo tile was creating a terrible problem with acrylic finishes," notes Scott Murray, the BG project manager responsible for the DIA facility. "The urine would eat through the finish, and then start eating through the terrazzo, damaging the substrate."

BG Services has provided cleaning and maintenance since the Denver airport was at Stapleton Field. The contractor moved to the new DIA and has been maintaining the facility since it opened in 1996. Murray has been with BG since 1988. He has 25 years of cleaning experience, having worked his way through both high school and college for building service contractors.

"We tried everything to address the terrazzo problem: standard acrylics, different sealers. We even tried another urethane finish, the one that requires the UV light. It tore up after only one and a half weeks."

The maintenance program with standard finishes was extensive, due to the high traffic in the DIA restrooms. "We were typically stripping the floors every three to six months, then putting down two coats of sealer and three of wax," Murray explained. "In addition, we were recoating the floor every three weeks, and burnishing the floor three times per week. We'd put sealers down first. They don't have the gloss of a finish but are supposed to protect the floor better. However, we never saw that at DIA."

Murray and his team, lead by Gregoria Matta, the third shift assistant project manager, laid down their first application of GlossTek almost one year ago. After the initial successful trial, BG has applied GlossTek to nearly 65 restrooms throughout the large DIA facility. For the first nine months, the only maintenance required was daily mopping and scrubbing. Recently, they added another coat of GlossTek at the base of the urinals; where there tends to be the most foot shuffling, as well as the highest concentrations of urine. The new application blended smoothly into the remainder of the restroom floors, which have stood up beautifully.

GlossTek has provided an enormous savings in terms of maintenance time. "It used to be that we needed nearly a full-time person in each concourse just to maintain the restrooms. Think about it. If you add up all the floor care maintenance requirements, beyond basic mopping, we had to touch those floors nearly 200 times each year. That includes stripping and refinishing, recoating and burnishing. In the past year, we had to touch them only once."

The labor savings were extremely important to BG, which recently had to deal with budget cutbacks due to a slow down in the airline industry. "Before GlossTek, my staff was having trouble keeping up with all maintenance assignments. Now, because of the amount of time freed up in the restrooms, we can provide our original levels of service, despite the budget reductions."

The cost savings of GlossTek go beyond the labor. Based on the amount of recoats and strips required each year, Murray estimates that BG is actually paying less annually for the GlossTek product than for acrylics & sealers, despite a difference in per-gallon price. "At first, the GlossTek price seemed high," Murray said, "but once you add up all the acrylic costs, it turns out to be a much lower total-cost solution."