



Maintenance and Operations Planning, Staffing + Budgeting Tool

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Developed by Facility Planning, Construction & District Support Services

Supplemental Information

Full Description of APPA Standards

Levels of Care

Custodial, Maintenance & Grounds

APPA Custodial Standards

Level 1 – Orderly Spotlessness

- Floors and base moldings shine and/or are bright and clean; colors are fresh. There is no buildup in corners or along walls.
- All vertical and horizontal surfaces have a freshly cleaned or polished appearance and have no accumulation of dust, dirt, marks, streaks, smudges, or fingerprints. Lights all work and fixtures are clean.
- Washroom and shower fixtures and tile gleam and are odor-free. Supplies are adequate.
- Trash containers and pencil sharpeners hold only daily waste, are clean and odor-free.

Level 2 – Ordinary Tidiness

- Floors and base moldings shine and/or are bright and clean. There is no buildup in corners or along walls, but there can be up to two days' worth of dust, dirt, stains, or streaks.
- All vertical and horizontal surfaces are clean, but marks, dust, smudges, and fingerprints are noticeable upon close observation. Lights all work and fixtures are clean.
- Washroom and shower fixtures and tile gleam and are odor-free. Supplies are adequate.
- Trash containers and pencil sharpeners hold only daily waste, are clean and odor-free.

Level 3 – Casual Inattention

- Floors are swept or vacuumed clean, but upon close observation there can be stains. A buildup of dirt and/or floor finish in corners and along walls can be seen.
- There are dull spots and/or matted carpet in walking lanes. There are streaks or splashes on base molding.
- All vertical and horizontal surfaces have obvious dust, dirt, marks, smudges, and fingerprints. Lamps all work and fixtures are clean.

- Trash containers and pencil sharpeners hold only daily waste, are clean and odor-free.

Level 4 – Moderate Dinginess

- Floors are swept or vacuumed clean, but are dull, dingy, and stained. There is an obvious buildup of dirt and/or floor finish in corners and along walls.
- There is a dull path and/or obviously matted carpet in the walking lanes. Base molding is dull and dingy with streaks or splashes.
- All vertical and horizontal surfaces have conspicuous dust, dirt, smudges, fingerprints, and marks.
- Lamp fixtures are dirty, and some (up to 5 percent) lamps are burnt out.
- Trash containers and pencil sharpeners have old trash and shavings. They are stained and marked.
- Trash containers smell sour.

Level 5 – Unkempt Neglect

- Floors and carpets are dull, dirty, dingy, scuffed, and/or matted. There is a conspicuous buildup of old dirt and/or floor finish in corners and along walls. Base molding is dirty, stained, and streaked. Gum, stains, dirt, dust balls, and trash are broadcast.
- All vertical and horizontal surfaces have major accumulations of dust, dirt, smudges, and fingerprints, all of which will be difficult to remove. Lack of attention is obvious.
- Light fixtures are dirty with dust balls and flies. Many lamps (more than 5 percent) are burned out.
- Trash containers and pencil sharpeners overflow. They are stained and marked. Trash containers smell sour.

APPA Levels of Maintenance

Level 1 – Showpiece Facility

- Maintenance activities appear highly focused.
- Typically, equipment and building components are fully functional and in excellent operating condition.
- Service and maintenance calls are responded to immediately.
- All regulatory submittals and requirements are met on or before submission dates.
- Buildings and equipment are regularly upgraded, keeping them current with modern standards and usage.

Level 2 – Comprehensive Stewardship

- Maintenance activities appear organized, with direction.
- Equipment and building components are usually functional and in operating condition.
- Service and maintenance calls are responded to in a timely manner.
- All regulatory submittals and requirements meet submission dates.
- Buildings and equipment are regularly upgraded, keeping them current with modern standards and usage.

Level 3 – Managed Care

- Maintenance activities appear to be somewhat organized but remain people-dependent.
- Equipment and building components are mostly functional but suffer occasional breakdown.
- Service and maintenance call response times are variable and sporadic without apparent cause.
- Regulatory submittals and requirements typically meet submission dates, with some short delays.
- Buildings and equipment are periodically upgraded to current standards and use, but not enough to control the effects of normal usage and deterioration.

Level 4 – Reactive Management

- Maintenance activities appear somewhat chaotic and are people-dependent.
- Equipment and building components are frequently broken and inoperative.
- Service and maintenance calls are typically not responded to in a timely manner.
- Regulatory submittals and requirements with the largest operational impact meet submission dates, but those that have less of an impact are typically late.
- Normal usage and deterioration continue unabated, making buildings and equipment inadequate to meet present use needs.

Level 5 – Crisis Response

- Maintenance activities appear chaotic and without direction.
- Equipment and building components are routinely broken and inoperative.
- Service and maintenance calls are never responded to in a timely manner.
- Regulatory submittals and requirements with the largest operational impact are typically submitted late, with other requirements ignored unless cited.
- Normal usage and deterioration continue unabated, making buildings and equipment inadequate to meet present use needs.

APPA Grounds Standards

Level 1 – State of the Art

Maintenance applied to high-quality diverse landscape. Associated with high-traffic urban areas, such as public squares, malls, government grounds, or college, university, or school campuses.

- **Turf Care.** Grass height maintained according to species and variety of grass. Mowed at least once every five working days but may be as often as once every three working days. Aeration as required but not less than four times per year. Reseeding or sodding as needed. Weed control to be practiced so that no more than 1 percent of the surface has weeds present.
- **Fertilizer.** Adequate fertilization applied to plant species according to their optimum requirements. Application rates and times should ensure an even supply of nutrients for the entire year. Nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium percentages should follow local recommendations. Trees, shrubs, and flowers should be fertilized according to their individual requirements for optimum growth. Unusually long or short growing seasons may modify the chart slightly.
- **Irrigation.** Sprinkler irrigated – electric automatic commonly used. Some manual systems could be considered adequate under plentiful rainfall circumstances and with adequate staffing. Frequency of use follows rainfall, temperature, season length, and demand of plant material.
- **Litter Control.** Minimum of once per day, seven days per week. Extremely high visitation may increase frequency. Receptacles should be plentiful enough to hold all trash usually generated between serving without overflowing.
- **Pruning.** Frequency dictated primarily by species and variety of trees and shrubs. Length of growing season and design concept also a controlling factor, i.e. clipped vs. natural-style hedges. Timing scheduled to coincide with low demand periods or to take advantage of special growing characteristics.
- **Disease and Insect Control.** At this maintenance level, the controlling object is to avoid public awareness of any problem. It is anticipated at Level 1 that

problems will either be prevented or observed at an early state and corrected immediately.

- **Snow Removal.** Snow removal starts the same day that accumulations reach .5 inches. At no time will snow be permitted to cover transportation or parking surfaces longer than noon of the day after the snow stops. Application of snow-melting compound and/or gravel is appropriate to reduce the danger of injury due to falls.
- **Surfaces.** Sweeping, cleaning, and washing of surfaces should be done so that at no time does an accumulation of sand, dirt, or leaves distract from the looks or safety of the area.
- **Repairs.** All repairs to all elements of the design should be done immediately when problems are discovered, providing that replacement parts and technicians are available to accomplish the job. When disruption of the public might be major or the repair is not critical, repairs may be postponed to a time period that is least disruptive.
- **Inspections.** A staff member should conduct inspection daily.
- **Floral Plantings & Mulch Applications.** Normally, extensive or unusual floral plantings are part of the design. These may include ground-level beds, planters, or hanging baskets. Often, multiple plantings are scheduled, usually for at least two blooming cycles per year. Some designs may call for a more frequent rotation of bloom. Maximum care, including watering, fertilizing, disease control, disbudding, and weeding, is necessary. Weeding flowers and shrubs is done a minimum of once per week. The desired standard is essentially weed free.

Level 2 – High Level of Maintenance

Associated with well-developed public areas, malls, government grounds, or college, university, or school campuses. Recommended level for most organizations.

- **Turf Care.** Grass should be cut once every five working days. Aeration is carried out as required but not less than two times per year. Reseeding or sodding must be done when bare spots are present. Weed control is practiced when weeds present a visible problem or when weeds represent

5 percent of the turf surface. Some re-emergent herbicide products may be used at this level.

- **Fertilizer.** Adequate fertilizer level to ensure that all plant materials are healthy and growing vigorously. Amounts depend on species, length of growing season, soils, and rainfall. Rates should correspond to at least the lowest recommended rates. Distribution should ensure an even supply of nutrients for the entire year. Nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium percentages should follow local recommendations. Trees, shrubs, and flowers should receive fertilizer levels to ensure optimum growth.
- **Irrigation.** Sprinkler irrigated – electric automatic commonly used. Some manual systems could be considered adequate under plentiful rainfall circumstances and with adequate staffing. Frequency of use follows rainfall, temperature, season length, and demand of plant material.
- **Litter Control.** Minimum of once per day, five days per week. Offsite movement of trash depends on size of containers and use by the public. High use may dictate more frequent cleaning.
- **Pruning.** Usually done at least once per season unless species planted dictate more frequent attention. Sculpted hedges or high-growth species may dictate a more frequent requirement than most trees and shrubs in natural-growth plantings.
- **Disease And Insect Control.** Usually carried out when disease or insects are inflicting noticeable damage, reducing vigor of plant material, or whenever the situation could be considered a bother to the public. Some preventive measures may be used, such as systemic chemical treatments. Cultural prevention of disease problems can reduce time spent in this category. Some minor problems may be tolerated at this level.
- **Snow Removal.** Snow removal by noon of the day after the snowfall. Gravel or snowmelt may be used to reduce ice accumulation.
- **Surfaces.** Should be cleaned, repaired, repainted, or replaced when their appearances have noticeably deteriorated.
- **Repairs.** Should be done whenever safety, function, or appearance is in question.
- **Inspections.** Inspection should be conducted by staff member at least once a day whenever regular staff is scheduled.

- **Floral Plantings & Mulch Applications.** Normally no more complex than two rotations of blooming plants per year. Care cycle is a minimum of once per week, but watering may be more frequent. Health and vigor dictate cycle of fertilizer and disease control. Beds are essentially kept free of weeds.

Level 3 – Moderate Level Maintenance

Associated with locations that have moderate to low levels of development or visitation, or with operations that (because of budget restrictions) cannot afford a high-level maintenance.

- **Turf Care.** Grass cut once every ten working days. Normally not aerated unless turf quality indicates a need or in anticipation of application of fertilizer. Reseeding or sodding only when major bare spots appear. Weed control measures normally applied when 50 percent of small areas-or 15 percent of the general turf-is infested with weeds.
- **Fertilizer.** Applied only when turf vigor seems to be low. Low-level application once per year. Suggested application rate is one-half the level recommended.
- **Irrigation.** Dependent on climate. Locations that receive more than 25 inches of rainfall a year usually rely on natural rainfall with the possible addition of portable irrigation during periods of drought. Dry climates that receive less than 25 inches of rainfall usually have some form of supplemental irrigation. When irrigation is automatic, a demand schedule is programmed. When manual servicing is required, the normal schedule would be two to three times per week.
- **Litter Control.** Minimum service of two to three times per week. High use may dictate higher levels during the warm season.
- **Pruning.** When required for health or reasonable appearance. With most tree and shrub species, pruning would be performed once every two to three years.
- **Disease And Insect Control.** Done only to address epidemics or serious complaints. Control measures may be put into effect when the health or survival of the plant material is threatened or when public comfort is an issue.

- **Snow Removal.** Snow removal is generally based on local law requirements and is usually accomplished by the day following snowfall. Some crosswalks or surfaces may not be cleared at all.
- **Surfaces.** Cleaned on a compliant basis. Repaired or replaced as budget allows.
- **Repairs.** Should be done whenever safety, function, or appearance is in question.
- **Inspections.** Inspections are conducted once per week.
- **Floral Plantings & Mulch Applications.** Only perennials or flowering trees or shrubs.

Level 4 – Moderately Low-Level Maintenance

Associated with locations affected by budget restrictions, and thereby cannot afford a high level of maintenance.

- **Turf Care.** Low-frequency mowing scheduled based on species. Low-growing grasses may not be mowed. High grasses may receive periodic mowing. Weed control limited to legal requirements for noxious weeds.
- **Fertilizer.** Not fertilized.
- **Irrigation.** No irrigation.
- **Litter Control.** Once per week or less.
- **Pruning.** No regular trimming. Safety or damage from weather may dictate actual work schedule.
- **Disease And Insect Control.** None except when the problem is epidemic and the conditions threaten resources or the public.
- **Snow Removal.** Snow removal based on local law requirements and generally accomplished by the day following snowfall. Some crosswalks or surfaces may not be cleared at all.
- **Surfaces.** Replaced or repaired when safety is a concern and when budget is available.
- **Repairs.** Should be done whenever safety, function, or appearance is in question.
- **Inspections.** Inspections are conducted once a month.
- **Floral Plantings & Mulch Applications.** None. May have wildflowers, perennials, flowering trees, or shrubs in place.

Level 5 – Minimum Level of Maintenance

Associated with locations suffering from severe budget restrictions.

- **Turf Care.** Low-frequency mowing scheduled based on species. Low-growing grasses may not be mowed; high grasses may receive periodic mowing. Weed control limited to legal requirements for noxious weeds.
- **Fertilizer.** Not fertilized
- **Irrigation.** No irrigation.
- **Litter Control.** On demand or complaint basis.
- **Pruning.** No pruning unless safety is involved.
- **Disease And Insect Control.** No control except in epidemic or safety situations.
- **Snow Removal.** Snow removal done based on local law requirements but generally accomplished by the day following snowfall. Some crosswalks or surfaces may not be cleared.
- **Surfaces.** Serviced only when safety is a consideration.
- **Repairs.** Should be done whenever safety or function is in question.
- **Inspections.** Inspections are conducted once a month.
- **Floral Plantings & Mulch Applications.** None. May have wildflowers, perennials, flowering trees, or shrubs in place.

Level 6 – Natural Area Not Developed

Associated with land in its original state. Once land is allowed to return to its original, or natural state, it is no longer included in the levels of maintenance.