



New Jersey Business & Industry Association



Tuesday, October 16, 2001
Princeton Marriott

**THE DEIRDRE IMUS ENVIRONMENTAL CENTER FOR PEDIATRIC ONCOLOGY AT
HACKENSACK UNIVERSITY MEDICAL CENTER | PRESIDENT AND CEO: JOHN P. FERGUSON**
HEADQUARTERS: HACKENSACK | FOUNDED: 1888 | NJ EMPLOYEES: 7,000 | BUSINESS: HEALTHCARE

This spring, The Deirdre Imus Environmental Center for Pediatric Oncology at Hackensack University Medical Center revamped its massive hospital cleaning operation to reduce the toxicity in their cleaning chemicals and the waste they generate.

In a four-phase operation that involved hospital personnel from senior management to the environmental services staff, the hospital replaced 18 of its 22 cleaning products with safer, environmentally sound alternatives that are just as effective. They also began buying cleaning materials in bulk, diluting them at the site to reduce the quantity and refilling the drums to keep containers out of the waste stream.

The hospital ordered new equipment and supplies, created ten new mixing stations, renovated the storage spaces and began a

comprehensive, hospital-wide education program. In one week, staff were educated, proficient and at ease with the new cleaning system and environmentally friendly products.

The new products are just as effective as the old ones, but without potentially harmful chemicals. For instance, the hospital replaced its existing window cleaner with one that was free from fuming solvents such as ammonia. They also switched to an all-purpose cleaner with no strong acids, chlorine, phosphates, benzene or hazardous ingredients. Additionally, the waste and toxic reduction effort is expected to yield a 15 percent cost savings.

The *Greening the Cleaning* program is an ongoing effort as the center strives to establish a model cleaning program for the healthcare industry as a whole.

