STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE

Window Cleaning SOP

Document no.	SOP-CLN-008
Revision	1.0
Owner	Site Supervisor
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Review cycle	Every 12 months

1. Purpose

To keep windows and glass surfaces streak-free and to make sure crews work safely at height when cleaning exterior or elevated glass.

2. Scope

Applies to contract cleaning crews cleaning interior glass and exterior windows reachable from the ground or a step ladder. High-rise or rope access window cleaning requires a specialist contractor and is outside this SOP.

Definitions

Squeegee	A rubber-bladed tool used to pull cleaning solution off glass in a single smooth stroke, leaving it streak-free.
Fan pattern	The wet, soapy path left on glass after applying solution with a scrubber before it is squeegeed off.
Exclusion zone	The taped or coned-off area below a window cleaner working at height to keep pedestrians clear of drips or falling tools.

3. Responsibilities

Cleaning Technician	Cleans assigned interior and exterior glass, sets up exclusion zones, and inspects ladders before use.
Site Supervisor	Confirms which windows are within scope, checks ladder and equipment condition, and approves working at height.
Facility Manager	Identifies windows that need specialist high-rise access and approves scheduling around building operations.

RACI matrix

Activity	Cleaning Technician	Site Supervisor	Facility Manager
Confirm scope and access equipment needed	C	R/A	C
Inspect ladders and equipment	R	A	-
Clean interior and exterior glass	R	A	I
Set up exclusion zones	R	A	-

R = Responsible, A = Accountable, C = Consulted, I = Informed

4. Materials and PPE

Materials, tools and systems

- Squeegee and scrubber with washer sleeve
- Window cleaning solution
- Lint-free detail cloths
- Extension pole for high interior glass
- Step ladder rated for the task
- Cones or tape for exclusion zones
- Window cleaning checklist

Personal protective equipment

- Non-slip closed shoes
- Disposable gloves

5. Procedure

Step	Task	Owner	Done
5.1	**Confirm the window scope** Check the checklist for which windows are in scope, and confirm with the supervisor that any glass above safe ladder reach is referred to a specialist high-rise contractor.	Site Supervisor	☐
5.2	**Inspect ladders and equipment** Inspect the step ladder for damage and a secure locking mechanism, and check squeegee blades for nicks before starting. **Checkpoint:** A damaged ladder or squeegee blade is taken out of service, not used for the task.	Cleaning Technician	☐
5.3	**Set up the work area** Place cones or tape to mark an exclusion zone below any exterior window being cleaned from a ladder, and remove obstacles from the interior work area. **Warning:** Never place a ladder on a wet or uneven surface, and never lean it against glass.	Cleaning Technician	☐
5.4	**Remove dust and debris first** Wipe down the frame and sill and remove loose dust or cobwebs from the glass before applying any liquid solution.	Cleaning Technician	☐
5.5	**Apply solution with the scrubber** Apply window cleaning solution to the glass with the scrubber sleeve in an even fan pattern, covering the full pane.	Cleaning Technician	☐
5.6	**Squeegee the glass** Pull the squeegee across the glass in overlapping horizontal or vertical strokes, wiping the blade dry between each stroke to avoid leaving lines.	Cleaning Technician	☐
5.7	**Detail the edges and corners** Wipe excess solution from the frame and corners with a lint-free cloth, and dry the sill to prevent drips onto the floor below.	Cleaning Technician	☐
5.8	**Use an extension pole for high interior glass** For interior glass above safe ladder reach, use an extension pole with the scrubber and squeegee attachment rather than overreaching from a ladder.	Cleaning Technician	☐

Step	Task	Owner	Done
5.9	**Move the ladder safely between windows** Descend fully before moving a ladder to the next window rather than shifting it while standing on it, and reset it on stable, level ground each time.	Cleaning Technician	☐
5.10	**Inspect for streaks** Check each finished pane from an angle in good light for streaks or missed spots, and re-squeegee any area that does not pass. **Checkpoint:** No streaks or missed spots are visible when the glass is checked from an angle in good light.	Cleaning Technician	☐
5.11	**Remove exclusion zone signage** Once exterior work is finished and the area below is dry, remove cones or tape and confirm no tools or equipment were left behind.	Cleaning Technician	☐

6. Quality checks

- Glass shows no streaks or missed spots when checked from an angle in good light.
- Frames and sills are wiped dry with no drips left on the floor below.
- Ladders and squeegee blades are inspected and any damaged equipment is removed from service.
- Exclusion zones are in place for the full duration of exterior work from a ladder.

7. Records

- Window cleaning checklist
- Ladder and equipment inspection log
- Specialist referral notes for high-rise glass

8. KPIs

- Percentage of panes passing streak inspection
- Ladder and equipment inspection completion rate
- Time to complete window cleaning against the schedule
- Incident rate for work performed at height

9. Common mistakes

- Using a squeegee blade with nicks that leave streak lines.
- Leaning a ladder against the glass instead of the frame.
- Moving a ladder while still standing on it.
- Skipping the exclusion zone for exterior work above head height.

10. Revision history

Revision	Date	Description	Reviewed by
1.0	September 15, 2026	Initial release	Alexa Uskova

Approval

Prepared by	Approved by	Date

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