



**COMPANY:**

Seneca One Realty/Held's Janitorial Services

**HEADQUARTERS:**

Buffalo, NY, USA

**HELD'S EMPLOYEES:**

65 Assigned to One HSBC Center

Total Number of Held's Employees : 400



## Owner Uses Request for Proposal to Establish New Operational Standards

Early in 2010, Kim Tripp, Director of Building Services for Seneca One Realty in Buffalo, NY, had never heard of the Cleaning Industry Management Standard or CIMS or even ISSA – The Worldwide Cleaning Industry Association. In her position with Seneca One Realty, Tripp was responsible for building operations at One HSBC Center, a multi-tenant Class A office building comprising approximately 968,000 square feet spread out over 40

stories and had really never given all that much thought to the building's cleaning service provider. After all, their primary cleaning provider, Held's Janitorial Services, had been providing services since 1986 and Tripp was satisfied with their performance.

Yet, it was actually Held's that first brought the CIMS program to Tripp's attention for possible inclusion in One HSBC Center's Request for Proposal. Stressing the emphasis placed on customer service by Seneca One and the importance of ensuring that the vendor –customer relationship is a true partnership, Held's viewed CIMS as a program that could bring the two together and provide one of the most prestigious business addresses in upstate New York with the validation that they desired. Tripp agreed, immediately recognizing the value of CIMS in helping Seneca One and Held's continue their work towards a common goal of maintaining their current standards of cleanliness and attractiveness in order to ensure tenant satisfaction.

Tripp and Seneca One, therefore, elected to include a requirement in the building RFP that their cleaning service provider be certified within six months of the start of a contract, specifically incorporating the following language:

“All contractors will be CIMS certified within 6 months of the inception of the contract. Failure to comply will cause the contract to be null and void. If the contractor is currently certified a copy of the certificate must be included with the contractor's proposal.”

Fortunately for Held's, when the contract went out for bid, they had already started the process of becoming certified and were already working toward validating their quality and customer-focus.

Tripp believes that including this requirement in their RFPs leads to a stronger group of candidates and assurance that the companies who are eligible to be awarded a contract have the necessary processes and procedures in place, and adhere to a higher standard. “It's an extremely important measuring tool when you're putting your RFPs out there,” stresses Tripp. “It is comforting to know if companies that are CIMS certified are bidding and whether they meet a higher quality standard.”

“ CIMS is more than just a certification; it allows you to look at business differently. People often get complacent when they have been doing business the same way for a long time and going through the CIMS certification process allowed us to start thinking about ways we can improve operations and develop a better relationship with our customers. ”

— Dan Hyman  
Held's Janitorial Services

**BEST TIP  
FOR COMPANIES  
THINKING ABOUT  
CERTIFICATION:**

*When selecting a cleaning service provider, be sure that they are a customer focused, CIMS certified organization that can assure you of open channels of communication so service problems can be avoided or easily resolved.*

Tripp now feels strongly about the overall value of CIMS, noting the fact that a CIMS-certified provider will have procedures in place to deliver consistent quality service that will result in a cleaner healthier building for the occupants of One HSBC Center. "We believe that the CIMS Certification provides a standard for establishing a 'CUSTOMER CENTERED ORGANIZATION,'" noted Tripp. "Such an organization is exactly the type of business we want to partner with."

Tripp has also noticed a change in Held's. Specifically, since going through the certification process, Tripp has noticed improvements in their operations, most notably in their use of innovative cleaning methods and products and equipment.

For Held's, the biggest change has been in the way they think about their business. Dan Hyman, Human Resource Manager, notes that CIMS has caused them to take a fresh look at everything they do. "CIMS is more than just a certification; it allows you to look at business differently," he says. "People often get complacent when they have been doing business the same way for a long time and going through the CIMS certification process allowed us to start thinking about ways we can improve operations and develop a better relationship with our customers."

Other notable improvements include the implementation of team cleaning and the use of green cleaning equipment and methods. These innovations have led not only to increased performance for Held's, but also cost savings that that they are able to pass along to Seneca One.

Looking to the future, Tripp believes that the cleaning industry will be taken much more seriously and that the industry has already begun moving to become greener and more efficient. "The industry has taken great strides in developing improved methods of cleaning along with using equipment and products that are both green and efficient," Tripp concludes.



## About CIMS:

CIMS is the first comprehensive management and operations standard for cleaning organizations. Administered by ISSA and the American Institute for Cleaning Sciences, CIMS is a standard of excellence designed to help building service contractors and in-house service providers develop quality, customer-centered organizations.

The CIMS framework is built around five quality principles that have proven to be the hallmarks of well-managed, successful cleaning operations:

- Quality Systems
- Service Delivery
- Human Resources
- Health, Safety & Environmental Stewardship
- Management Commitment

Why should a company certify to CIMS? Daniel Wagner, director of CIMS for the ISSA, explains: "Implementation of the standard's elements affords an organization a tremendous opportunity to validate its management systems and processes. Professional, customer-centered cleaning organizations finally have a touchstone resource, a common rallying point around which all members of the industry can gather and work toward achieving an unprecedented level of professionalism and excellence."



For more information visit  
[www.issa.com/standard](http://www.issa.com/standard) or  
call 800-225-4772