



## **CIMS-Green Building Frequently Asked Questions**

- 1. What is CIMS-Green Building or CIMS-GB?**  
CIMS-Green Building or CIMS-GB is the sixth dimension to the ISSA Cleaning Industry Management Standard & Certification Program, providing cleaning organizations with the opportunity to certify that their green cleaning program meets an industry standard. As such, CIMS-GB represents the sixth section of CIMS, joining the five traditional management sections: (1) Quality Systems; (2) Service Delivery; (3) Human Resources; (4) Health, Safety & Environmental Stewardship; and (5) Management Commitment.
- 2. Can a cleaning organization achieve certification to the CIMS-GB criteria?**  
Yes, a cleaning organization can achieve CIMS-GB certification by verifying compliance with the required elements in the Green Building section. Verification of compliance is achieved by undergoing a third-party assessment.
- 3. How does the CIMS-GB assessment process work?**  
The CIMS-GB certification process is identical to the traditional CIMS process. In order to achieve CIMS-GB certification, an organization is required to undergo a comprehensive on-site assessment that includes document review, interviews with personnel and customers, and visits to individual customer sites. Specifically, the organization must provide its third-party assessor with a list of buildings that are “green cleaned,” and the assessor will randomly select properties to visit in order to assess compliance to the CIMS-GB criteria.
- 4. Does CIMS-GB apply to an individual property or to an organization as a whole?**  
CIMS, and by extension CIMS-GB, is a companywide certification. A CIMS-GB certified organization can assert that it is in compliance with the five traditional sections of CIMS for all operations and that its green cleaning program is in compliance with the CIMS-GB criteria in those buildings where green cleaning is performed.
- 5. Can an organization apply for only CIMS-GB certification?**  
No. CIMS-GB certification is an optional “add-on” to the traditional CIMS certification program. Organizations, therefore, may achieve CIMS certification alone by demonstrating compliance with the five traditional management sections of the Standard or may achieve both CIMS certification and the CIMS-GB designation by demonstrating compliance with all six sections of the Standard, including the GB section. An organization may not apply for only CIMS-GB certification.
- 6. What additional fees are associated with CIMS-GB certification?**

There are no additional application or certification fees for the CIMS-GB designation. Rather, organizations will be responsible for the traditional application and certification fees regardless of whether they pursue traditional CIMS or CIMS-GB certification. ISSA is not charging an additional certification fee for the GB designation in hope that most organizations will pursue the additional designation, thereby accelerating the overall “greening” of the industry.

Although there are no additional application or certification fees, pursuing CIMS-GB certification will require an additional assessment day to verify compliance with the GB criteria.

**7. How is CIMS-GB different from other certifications?**

Like CIMS in general, CIMS-GB applies to an entire cleaning organization and the organization’s capability to meet customer requirements. Further, CIMS-GB is less prescriptive than most industry certification programs, providing general requirements for product, equipment and procedure selection, rather than requiring the use of specific tools and systems. As such, cleaning organizations are free to select manufacturers, distributors, products, and educational tools that best assist them in complying with the criteria.

**8. Why has the new CIMS-GB criteria been added?**

Demand for “green” certification is growing, especially as the USGBC’s Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) program gains popularity. Building owners and managers want assurance that their cleaning service provider is capable of providing a sustainable cleaning service and can help them achieve LEED points for green cleaning activities. CIMS-GB is intended to offer cleaning organizations a certification that is closely tailored to provide their customers with precisely what they need to secure LEED-EBOM points, while greening their operations overall.

**9. How does CIMS-GB change the “ISSA Certification Expert” (I.C.E.) program? Does it affect an industry professional’s I.C.E. status?**

The CIMS-GB criteria will be included in the general “ISSA Certification Expert” (I.C.E.) curriculum and will be taught as part of the I.C.E. workshop. Further, those individuals who achieved I.C.E. certification prior to August 1, 2009, will be given an opportunity to attend a workshop or participate in a complimentary webinar to learn about the criteria. There will be no separate GB designation for I.C.E. certified individuals and no additional fees.

**10. Where can I go to learn more about the CIMS program and certification in general?**

The best place to start is with the Frequently Asked Questions document on CIMS certification in general, available at [www.issa.com/data/File/CIMS/FAQ.pdf](http://www.issa.com/data/File/CIMS/FAQ.pdf)