**The Future of Sustainable Facility Management: Key Trends to Watch**

Written by OpenWorks

Commercial building management has come a long way in recent years. It has become a key driver of sustainability in businesses worldwide. As the world grapples with the climate crisis, sustainable facility management will be increasingly important in the days ahead. Discover some key trends to watch as we move towards a more sustainable future. So, how can we, as facilities management professionals, stay away from simply "greenwashing" and do something that truly makes a difference.

**Think Smarter**

Sustainability is no longer a buzzword, it's a necessity. The situation's urgency has led many businesses to embrace sustainability in their operations, and facility management is no exception. Sustainable facility management guides businesses toward a brighter future.

By utilizing [sensors, automation, and artificial intelligence,](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VYkOHMwR0ss&t=16s) building managers can optimize energy usage, reduce waste, and improve efficiency. Use sensors to detect when a room is not in use and automatically turn off the lights and adjust the temperature. This not only reduces energy consumption but also improves comfort for occupants (and helps your bottom line).

**Build it Better**

The use of sustainable materials in [construction and maintenance](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KKIbQ_53WAw&t=552s) continues to surge, from recycled materials to low VOC (volatile organic compounds) paints and coatings. By prioritizing sustainable materials or reusing older materials, businesses can reduce their environmental impact and create healthier spaces for their occupants.

**Life is a Circle**

The world continues to move towards a circular economy. Gone are the days of the traditional linear model of take, make, and dispose of, and here to stay is the model of reduce, reuse, and recycle – with a heavy emphasis on reduce and reuse.

Circularity requires a shift in mindset and a willingness to experiment with new approaches. Facility management and commercial cleaning companies like OpenWorks can act as a compass towards circularity, perhaps opting for reusable materials, purchasing products created from recycled materials, or reducing waste through smart business practices (like turning often unused green lawns into low-water native plant gardens).

**Hitting Net-Zero**

A key trend in sustainable facility management is the move towards net-zero buildings. Net-zero buildings are buildings that produce as much energy as they consume over the course of a year.

This is achieved through energy efficiency measures and renewable energy generation, including heat pumps, rooftop solar panels, and low-flow faucets. Green certifications, such as LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design), provide a framework for sustainable design, construction, and operation of buildings – and [hitting net-zero](https://www.openworksweb.com/blog/the-most-efficient-supply-chain-facilities-are-reaching-beyond-technology).

Sustainable facility management is a critical component of any business's sustainability strategy. OpenWorks stands out from other facility management and janitorial services companies with our unique and tailored approach to sustainable facility management.

With 40 years of experience, OpenWorks understands the challenges and risks that businesses face and works closely with clients to provide consistent and personalized services for each facility. [Click here to learn how OpenWorks can help you meet your business goals while making your facilities safer, cleaner, and more sustainable.](https://www.openworksweb.com/about-openworks/contact)