

Spring Forward!

It's officially spring, a time to take a fresh look at your business and do a little spring cleaning. Here's a checklist of items to complete to make your store look and feel new.

- Start here first:** Paint and clean the employees' bathroom (everything will go much more smoothly if you start here first).
- Next, brighten up the appearance of the public restroom, employees' break room, fitting room and counseling area. Set a reasonable budget to bring a fresh look to these areas. Remember, paint and a little artwork will go a long way.
- Be sure to set a cleaning schedule for all of the areas mentioned above.

Next, focus on the exterior of your store.

EXTERIOR:

- Start by looking up! Clean underneath overhangs and awnings. A good sweep with a broom will get rid of all those cobwebs.
- Next, clean or replace all exterior lighting. Add more lights if necessary. For security and safety reasons, eliminate all dark areas outside of your store.

Signs:

- Test exterior signage for proper illumination. Does your sign read Drug Store or Rug Store?
- Reset timers for signage and have the signs turn on the minute you open and not shut off until your store is closed, even on sunny days!
- Invest in a sidewalk sign and/or temporary banner promoting your compounding or diabetic shoe business.
- Consider additional signage for either the back or the two sides of the building. If you can see any of them from the road, you should have a sign.
- Remove all signs from the door; only store hours, written in white, should be on your entrance door. Your entrance door should not look like your refrigerator door.
- Remove discolored, outdated, and unnecessary signs from your window.

Cleaning:

- Have all windows and doors inside and out professionally cleaned. Pay special attention to all door handles – these need to sparkle. This is the one item that every customer at one time or another has to look at and touch.
- Power wash the sidewalk area. Try this once and you will be amazed at the results.
- If you have a trash can near your store, make sure it looks new and clean. Do not let a beat up, overflowing trash can spoil the looks of your store.
- Set a cleaning schedule with assigned duties for the exterior of the store.

Refresh Your Store Entrance:

- No one should be allowed to smoke in front of your store. Customers should not be exposed to secondhand smoke or a trail of cigarette butts as they enter and exit.
- Paint something outside – trim, poles, columns, or the entire exterior front. This will do wonders for your store entrance.
- Look alive: add some color to your store with flower boxes or flowerpots.
- Restripe the ADA parking area. Clean the handicapped parking only sign.
- Consider investing in easy-to-open or automatic doors, especially if you offer DME products.

Now that we have made the outside of your store look enticing to enter, it's time to clean and straighten the inside.

- Start here first:** Have a surprise one-on-one employee review; keep this as positive as possible.
- Next, upgrade the employee dress code – all staff should look as professional as your store does.

INTERIOR:

Cleaning:

- Professionally clean the flooring. Remove all stains from the carpet. Replace any worn runners or area rugs.
- Replace worn-out mops and/or vacuum cleaners (the #1 reason why carpet wears out so fast is because it is not vacuumed properly or often enough).
- Look up! Ensure that every light in the ceiling works. Replace defective light ballast and burnt or nearly burnt out bulbs. Consider replacing all lighting with energy-efficient bulbs. Clean the fluorescent tube lighting, diffusers and lens covers (suggestion: clean one row a week until the entire store has been done; start in the pharmacy area).
- Keep looking up! Remove all soiled and stained ceiling tiles, even if it isn't your responsibility. It could be a long wait if you are waiting for the landlord to do it.
- Dust and clean the frames and glass of all professional licenses.

Checkout Area & Counters:

- Strip-clean all checkout, pickup and drop off counters. Remerchandise these areas so they remain clutter-free. Be sure to clean the top of your pharmacy counter.
- Trick: reverse the order in which the candy is merchandised underneath your checkout counter. Customers will insist you brought in new candy.
- Purge underneath all checkout counters. These should be well arranged and never have employee personal belongings in them, such as backpacks, purses, food and/or drink.
- Have a display of lip balm with SPF protection at every counter (lip balm is the #1 impulse item purchased in a pharmacy).

Refresh Your Store:

- Freshen up your waiting area with better lighting, new paint, and clean chairs. Remember to offer at least one chair with arms and one without arms. Benches are not recommended.
- Paint something inside – one wall, trim, or lettering. Consider adding graphics to your walls: graphics picturing a wheelchair, wrist brace, diabetic shoe, and/or compounding are a good place to start. Or take professional action shots of your staff to hang around the store.
- Update any signs that state your return policy.
- Check all exit signs before the fire marshal inspects your store.

Refresh Your Merchandise:

- Clean and double the number of shopping baskets that you have available for customers.
- Add at least one new item to each major OTC category in your store. Place a “new item” sign in front of the item. This will help your image as a progressive establishment.
- Display five new signs promoting your private label brand.
- Fill your sunglass rack.
- Remerchandise any item that is sitting on the floor and not on a fixture.
- Inspect all storage areas for outdated and overstocked items. Start with the drawers underneath the greeting card section. The owner of the store needs to do this, not an employee.
- Discard or refill all floor displays that are half or less than half full.
- Set a schedule to visit [NCPA's Front-End Overhaul webpage](#) with your key employees.