

SHOP TALK

*From the Physical Plant Division of the University of Florida
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UF UNIVERSITY of
FLORIDA

Mission Statement:

We create and maintain facilities for the university community.

PPD Completes Sun Terrace Renovation

Physical Plant's Health Science Center Paint Crew has recently completed a major deck renovation project at the Sun Terrace. The entire deck was stripped, sanded, and then re-painted with a water-resistant coating. In all, the crew re-painted some 465,000 square feet of concrete.

"This project came about because the existing coating on the Sun Terrace deck was creating leaks in the building roof underneath," said Maintenance Superintendent Jim Thompson. "The existing coating was supposed to be waterproof, but during periods of heavy rainfall it would allow water to seep through into the concrete beneath. The coating prevented the water from evaporating back out, however, and the trapped pockets of water eventually began forcing their way through the concrete and into the building."

The university entered into litigation with the contractor who had applied the original coating, requiring the company to come back out and remove the coating. Meanwhile, Thompson began researching replacement products for the terrace.

"The Sun Terrace is made up of concrete slabs atop a layer of sand, with a metal foundation," he said. "There are small expansion joints between the slabs, filled with a foam sealant substance. These joints allow the concrete to expand and contract slightly due to temperature variations. Because of the continual expansion and contraction of the concrete slabs, it's impossible to ever completely waterproof the deck. Therefore, we decided to go with a water-repellent coating, which would allow some water to pass through during heavy rain, but would also allow the water to evaporate back out, preventing leaks."

With the old coating removed and the deck ready for re-sealing, Thompson asked for permission to have his crew apply the new coating, rather than bring-

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Overhead shot of the finished Sun Terrace deck. PPD employees spent over 1300 hours (including many nights and weekends) re-painting the deck, at a considerable savings to the University over using outside contractors.

Palm Pilots

PPD Grounds employees Steve Corbitt (left front) and Keith Gaylord (right) maneuver a crane-suspended Robillini palm tree into place in front of the Harn Museum of Art.

The Robillini palms, along with Zamia shrub-beries, were installed at the museum entrance as part of a landscaping upgrade at the beginning of Fall semester.



End Of An Era: Al Krause Leaves PPD Recycling Department

When Al Krause came to the University of Florida in February of 1988, he had no idea that he would leave, eighteen years later, as the architect of one of the most successful institutional recycling programs in the United States. The retired Army veteran, who had risen to the rank of major during his twenty years in the armed services, was just looking for a job.

"I had just retired from the military," he said. "My wife and I had moved to Florida, down to Miami, to live near some older relatives of hers, and those relatives had passed away. So I started looking for work, and I came up here to Gainesville to the University to drop off my resume. It just so happened that as I was in the personnel office, they were looking for someone with my qualifications to fill a position at the Physical Plant. So I went for an interview the same day, and I ended up getting the job."

Originally, Al was hired to develop and implement policies and procedures for PPD to deal with outside contractors. But when Florida's Solid Waste Management Act was passed in 1988, UF (along with all other state institutions) was required by law to implement a recycling initiative on campus. Then-PPD Director Robert Kramer offered Al the position of coordinator of the fledgling program, and he accepted. Thus, the university's Recycling Program was born.



Outgoing PPD Recycling Coordinator Al Krause, left, receives a plaque and congratulations from Assistant Vice President Dave O'Brien at Krause's retirement ceremony.

"In the beginning, I had no budget, and I wasn't allowed to hire any employees for the recycling program," Al said. "That was part of the state law – the thinking at that time was that recycling would be a gold mine of riches. Everybody thought that we would take garbage and magically convert it to material for industry and make big bucks, and we'd make so much that the recycling program would be able to support itself without any money from the state. In reality, things were quite a bit different! I had to borrow money from another department, with the promise that I'd pay it back by the end of the year, just to get off the ground that first year."

Al began putting the pieces in place for the program as quickly as possible. He combed the campus, looking at waste types and the activities that created them, and figured out what types of waste material were the best candidates for recycling. "Yard waste, paper, concrete and scrap metal," he said. "Those were the items that brought in the most revenue at the beginning, and those are still our most valuable recyclable resources."

The program began to move into gear. Each campus building's waste paper output was calculated and collection bins were allocated as necessary. Yard waste was collected, composted and turned into mulch. Al contracted with a local rock crushing company to crush old cement, and he located a buying outlet in Gainesville to purchase scrap metal.

"We ended up re-defining a lot of old metal surplus property as scrap, since it was being disposed of anyway," Al explained. "This allowed us to classify it as refuse under the state guidelines, and therefore we were able to recover and sell it in order to fund the program."

Thanks to Al's efforts, UF's recycling program hit the state goal of recycling 30% of campus waste after just eighteen months, creating significant savings for the University. And the program continued to grow as more members of campus became aware of its existence and began recycling. It grew so much, in fact, that Al began to realize that this was much more than a one-man job.

"At a certain point, I realized that I was going to have to have some help to manage this thing," he said, smiling. "So after a few years, I got an OPS assistant, a student, to work with me. And then in 1999, I finally was able to hire a full-time employee, Steve Butler, for the recycling program, and he's been with us ever since."

Although having an extra employee made a big difference for the program, Al still saw opportunity for continued growth in PPD's recycling effort. "I knew that our program could never reach its full potential with the resources that we were operating with at that time," he said. "So in 2000, I asked for, and received, control of the entire Solid Waste Management office at Physical Plant. This allowed us to create a comprehensive, integrated waste management program, and opened up many new opportunities for our recycling efforts. We were able to expand our paper recycling program to include dumpsters, compactors and balers on campus. We could use the garbage trucks to haul more waste and increase our productivity. Our increased manpower and resources allowed us to begin recycling items such as plastics, and chemical and automotive waste."

Today the University of Florida recycling program stands among the best in the nation. Annually, an average of 37% of the total campus waste is recycled, and that number is increasing every year. "We recycle almost everything that Physical Plant touches," says Al Krause.

"Al has been running our program for so long that his name is synonymous with recycling here at Physical Plant and the University of Florida," said PPD Assistant Vice President Dave O'Brien. "He has built the program from the ground up, and has

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Building Services Introduces New And Improved Restroom Products



Senior Custodial Supv. Kathy Robinson re-loads a new paper towel dispenser at Carr Hall.

When Physical Plant tallied up the results from its most recent Customer Satisfaction surveys, one of the major areas our customers felt we could improve was the quality of our bathroom products. So to that end, PPD Building Services has introduced a new line of paper towels and tissue to campus restrooms, as well as new foaming soap dispensers.

Building Services Asst. Director Derrick Bacon said, “Many of our customers indicated in the surveys that our old products were too rough, and that our old dispensers didn’t always allow easy access to the products. Our new paper products are much softer, and our foaming soap dispensers were selected to offset the increased costs of the paper products – the foam soap is designed to allow customers to sanitize their hands while using less actual soap than our previous dispensers. These products are all also environmentally friendly.”

Bacon said that all restrooms on campus have received the new products, with the exception of the Reitz Union, football stadium, and campus housing, which are not under Building Services’ jurisdiction. Customer feedback so far has been overwhelmingly positive – PPD has received dozens of letters and emails commending the new restroom products.

“Building Services is committed to providing excellent service to our customers, and to ensure that their work environment is clean, safe and healthy,” said Bacon. “Our customer surveys are an outstanding tool for gauging the success of our efforts, and to find out what we can do better to please our customers.”

In reference to other upcoming changes, the Assistant Director mentioned Building Services’ efforts to become more environmentally friendly in its cleaning methods. “Our next goal is to use ‘Green Cleaning’ initiatives to improve our products and cleaning procedures,” he said. “We have begun making a real effort to begin using environmentally friendly products and practices on a larger scale, and that will be a big part of what we do in the future.”

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ing in another outside contractor. “My major reason for wanting to handle the project in-house was that I knew if our guys did it, it would be done right,” he said. “Our crew put in a lot of hours on this job – they worked weekends and nights in order to work around the heavy foot traffic on the deck during the days. Everything was done by the book – we were constantly monitoring dew points, concrete temperature, all the variables that were necessary to getting the new coating down correctly. PPD Grounds Department helped us out greatly by moving over fifty fiberglass planters around the deck to give us space. Our employees really exerted themselves to finish this project in a timely manner, and I’m very proud of their work.”

Jerry Kidney, Asst. Vice President for Health Affairs at the HSC, said, “Thanks to the excellent collaboration among the divisions of the Physical Plant Division, the HSC Sun Terrace renovation project is an extraordinary example of function, creativity, and beauty, not to mention being the culmination



PPD Health Science Center employees who worked on the project included (left toright): Jessie Matthews, Harley Ingle, Paul McComis, Ben Werts, Charlie Seroki, Danny Moore, Peder Winkle, and Kinney Standridge.



PPD Grounds Department took care of moving the 50+ fiberglass planters to give the painters space during the Sun Terrace renovation.

of a great deal of hard work on the part of many. The Sun Terrace has become an inviting outdoor setting for students, staff, faculty, and visitors, and the people of the Health Science Center are extremely grateful for the efforts that have been focused on this important area.”

The new coating consists of two coats of stain, one coat of sealer, and one coat of “safety grit” to improve footing on the deck surface. According to Thompson, the new coating will last 5-10 years with minor maintenance and touch-up. “This project has been a resounding success for the PPD Health Science Center,” he said. “The results look fantastic, and by using our in-house crew, we saved quite a bit of money for the University of Florida.”

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done an outstanding job of managing our resources. Al has created a recycling effort that consistently exceeds the standards set by the State of Florida, and has brought UF and PPD national acclaim.”

It would not be possible to list everyone who helped make the recycling program a success over the years, according to Al. “There were literally thousands of people who have helped build the program - some in an official capacity, some as volunteers, some in countless other ways,” he said. “I would, however, like to thank PPD Director Dave O’Brien, VP of Finance and Administration Ed Poppell, and PPD Associate Director of Operations Eric Cochran. They have all been extremely supportive, reliable and helpful through the years, and gave our recycling program their whole-hearted support. Also, the day-to-day contributions of UF and PPD staff have been invaluable, and much appreciated. There are just so many people who gave time and effort and really made the program and myself a success.”

Following Al’s retirement, Dale Morris will take over as Recycling/Solid Waste Coordinator at Physical Plant, and the outgoing coordinator says the program is in good hands. “Dale is a great choice to take this program to the next level,” Al said. “He’s very qualified and very capable, and will be able to maintain and improve our recycling efforts for the future.”

Dale comes to PPD from Ocala Recycling, where he served as the non-metals recycling coordinator for the Ocala/Marion County area for the past two years. Dale was born in Michigan, and moved to Florida when he was 15 years old. He received his bachelor’s degree in Marketing and Management from the UF, and when a friend alerted him to the job opening at PPD, he wasted no time in putting in his application.

“I felt that the job looked like a perfect fit for me,” he said. “I’m familiar with UF and university processes, and I have been extremely impressed by the overall recycling program that Al has put together. This is a very well-constructed program - it’s not like I’m stepping into a position that requires a major overhaul to work efficiently. At the same time, though, I certainly have some ideas, and I feel that I can contribute to areas of growth within the program.”

One area for growth that Dale is working to address right away is recycling of trash on football game days. “We currently use cardboard trash boxes to collect litter on football Saturdays,” he explained. “In the past, there was an issue with not enough trash receptacles, and fans would just pile trash bags all over campus, and it was a real eyesore. Al came up with the idea to set out the trash boxes on game days, and that has been a great solution to the problem of garbage all over campus, and has cleaned things up in a major way. But now I want to take that next step and start recycling that trash. I plan to offer recycling boxes next to regular trash receptacles, and to give fans the opportunity to separate and recycle their garbage both inside and outside the stadium – we currently don’t have a recycling initiative for inside the stadium on game days, and I plan to change that in the near future.”

As a member of the Office of Sustainability’s Zero Waste Task Force, Dale knows the importance UF’s administration places on recycling, both now and in the future. “I plan to work closely with the Office of Sustainability and raise awareness of our recycling program as much as possible,” he said. “That will be a huge focus of my job here, as we work towards the University’s goal of being a zero-waste institution. At the same time, I’m working to advance our immediate goal of being the best university recycling program in the country. As the flagship university recycling program in the state of Florida, other state institutions look to us for guidance, and I plan to continue our role of innovation and leadership in this area.”

Still, the future expansion of the UF recycling program will be largely dependent on the amount of support that it receives from the university community, according to Al Krause. He said, “To take that next step forward, we need co-operation from other areas of campus, other departments – there is much that can be done to help PPD with our recycling efforts, and I hope that the rest of campus will follow suit and increase their participation in our program. Besides creating revenue for the University and saving money, recycling enhances our image and contributes to the sustainability of our local and global community, and minimizing our trash output is a goal we should all be working towards. The most environmentally friendly thing that people can do is to reduce your consumption at the source – buy only those things that you really need, avoid excessive packaging, and buy durable, repairable items. Reducing waste is mainly a matter of reducing consumption, buying things that will last, and diverting useful things to people who can use them.”



Incoming Coordinator Dale Morris plans to continue PPD’s tradition of excellence in recycling.