

How green hospitality encourages a more sustainable way of life

In light of South Africa's current environmental climate, it has become necessary to manage and maintain hospitality facilities effectively in order to reduce water waste. According to the Green Hotels Association: "Green Hotels are environmentally-friendly properties (where) managers are eager to institute programmes that save water, save energy and reduce solid waste - while saving money."



Image Supplied.

In an interview with eNCA, Professor Anthony Turton, a University of the Free State (UFS) water strategist stated that South Africa's water crisis is far from over. While Turton urges the South African government to make some needed structural and financial adjustments to alleviate the economic strain of the water crisis, John J Coetzee (CEO at Green Worx Cleaning Solutions) believes that some responsibility also falls on citizens and facility and hospitality managers.

"We must create and sustain a world in which we are working with the environment, rather than against it. The travel and hospitality industries play a key role in how people from around the world come to see and understand the possibilities of green living. Managing a green hotel not only helps to cut back on the large-scale water waste that the hospitality industry is at risk of, but also has the potential of revealing a more sustainable way of life to a global audience," says Coetzee.

Careful, conscious eco-friendly maintenance

He also points out that buildings that are built green must be properly maintained to remain green. Simply building with green products does not guarantee that a green star rated building will remain green. Careful and conscious eco-friendly maintenance is required. Hospitality managers need to investigate how their buildings are being maintained. A key element of this would be looking at what products are being used to clean the buildings. Cleaning facilities with chemical products is damaging not only to the environment but also to staff and guests. Green buildings need to be managed and maintained with cleaning products that save water, save energy and reduce solid waste.

Coetzee continues: "Being a 'green' hotel means far more than just asking guests not to have their towels washed every day. It is about a conscious and concerted effort to make sure that each and every part of your facility management is in line with managing and maintaining an eco-friendly environment for all."

As green living and awareness grow within popular culture, green hotels are becoming the desired destination for many travellers. According to scmp.com, Millennials are amongst the highest percentile of today's global travellers and they are twice as likely to select a location that can offer them 'sustainable luxury'.

The article outlines Credit Suisse's 2017 Global Investor report: *Millennials are driving sustainable practices in various industries*, and quotes researcher Julie Saussier in the report: "Companies must deliver good social and environmental performance and engage in sustainable practices or their future growth could be at risk."

"Building, managing and maintaining a green facility in the hospitality sector is not only our duty to the world and its inhabitants, but it also helps the successfulness of our businesses as we reduce costs and increase desirability amongst sustainability-conscious millennials," concludes Coetzee.

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