

SPEAKING OF | GOING GREEN

With Dale A. Sailer, President and CEO, Disaster Kleenup International (DKI)

North America's largest disaster restoration contracting organization announced it has become the first organization to have achieved the Green Risk Professional designation established by Vale Training Solutions. DKI President and CEO Dale A. Sailer spoke with *Claims*' Christina Bramlet about the importance of understanding green construction and how companies and the industry as a whole can do their part in creating green environments and serving evolving client needs.

What exactly is DKI certified to repair now?

The green risk certification training gives DKI members the knowledge and expertise necessary to evaluate damage to an existing "green" building and understand what must be done in order to work on it and build it back in such a manner that it remains "green." In addition, the training from Vale provided our members with insight into the connection between green building principles and the environment. This afforded them an opportunity to study mainstream green design and energy conservation methods.

As a result, members understand the unique criteria used in green rating systems, such as Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED). Moreover, unlike any other restoration services group, they understand the valuation issues critical to assessing initial property coverage limits.

How will this enhance operations?

It is important to understand that no other property damage restoration services group has taken significant steps toward understanding what it means to restore green. DKI members take great pride in understanding the building components with which they work, how to restore in the most efficient way possible, and now have the ability to do so in an environmentally conscious manner. By ensuring that 100 percent of DKI's locations are green-certified, we can offer a unique claim management solution to carriers that are looking for this level of expertise, especially those offering green endorsements.

How difficult was this process? Describe the requisite training.

There were two factors relative to difficulty. The first was scale. More than 160 companies (coast to coast) comprise DKI. In order to accommodate schedules and minimize expense, we held 10 different sessions at various locations around the country over a three-month period to ensure that more than 160 individuals were adequately trained.

The second factor was time. The training lasts a full week, and in this industry, time is money. It is difficult to take a senior manager or owner out of the business for that length of time; however, given the importance of the topic, we were able to get this done.

As for prerequisites, a "participant" merely needs to be a general contractor who services the insurance/property restoration marketplace. However, a participant has to pass two exams based on the training material if he or she wishes to become certified.

Gaining these designations within the DKI organization was particularly important for us, given our current leadership position in the industry. DKI has more certified restorers in our organization than any other company by a factor of over three times (the certified restorer designation is the highest professional achievement in the restoration industry). By being the first and currently only organization to become GRP-certified, DKI reinforces its leadership position.

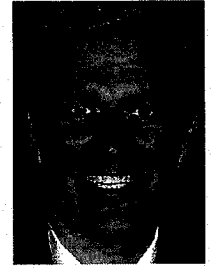
Why should other companies seek this designation?

The green impact is clearly influencing decision-making in all industries because it is an important issue to so many people. Frankly, it is simply the right thing to do if we care about our planet. As a business, our number one objective is to meet our customers' needs. Increasingly, those needs have a significant green component. We believe that this designation will allow us to deliver to our current and future clients an even higher level of expertise than we have in the past.

Candidly, the competitor in me hopes that no one else in our market seizes on this opportunity and we can have it all to ourselves, because the market is going to be huge. However the public citizen in me hopes that all of my competitors move in this direction, not just because it would raise the bar on our industry, but it will protect our most precious and scarce resources.

What expertise do you provide when insured buildings need "upgrade to green" endorsements?

DKI GRP-certified companies will work directly with policyholders and/or carriers to determine what specific actions need to take place to upgrade a building to green status. As each scenario is different, and the needs of every building vary, I would encourage the carrier or policyholder to schedule an assessment.



▲ Sailer helped more than 160 companies in DKI's network attain the Green Risk Professional designation.

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