Issue No. 04 November 2026

Arelli Cleaning Magazine

CLEANING INDUSTRY NEWS & INSIGHTS

Welcome to the new monthly format of Arelli Cleaning Magazine - Cleaning Industry News & Insights. Inside this edition: Europe's largest retail cobot rollout, Ontario's proposed workplace recycling overhaul, a landmark U.S. cleaning apprenticeship, two memorable cleaning stories (including Part 1 of a two-part story continued next month), highlights from our social channels and a shift-ready winter floor tip.

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Hundreds of autonomous floor cobots set for day-one rollout across 400 UK stores



Starting January 1, 2027, UK facilities contractor NIC FM Services Group plans to deploy hundreds of collaborative floor-cleaning robots across roughly 400 ASDA retail stores nationwide. Announced on November 19, 2026, the programme is described by the company as the largest single cobotic cleaning deployment undertaken in Europe.

Unlike most automation trials, the rollout skips a gradual multi-month pilot and aims to have autonomous machines operating across the full store estate from day one. The goal is standardized floor presentation across hundreds of high-traffic locations where labour hours are stretched thin.

Company leadership emphasized that the machines-known as cobots because they work alongside staff-are meant to absorb repetitive open-floor scrubbing rather than eliminate frontline teams. That frees experienced cleaners to focus on washrooms, touchpoints, entrances and detail work that machines still cannot judge reliably.

Why it matters: Large multi-site retailers are moving past small robotics experiments into full-portfolio contracts. For commercial cleaning owners and facility managers, the practical question is no longer whether floor robots work, but how to pair machine hours with human detail work cleanly.

Source: NIC FM Services Group (November 19, 2026) - https://www.nicgroup.co.uk/news/nic-group-largest-cobotic-cleaning/

Twenty-five volunteers, twenty families: Toronto joins free cleaning drive for cancer patients

When someone is going through cancer treatment, scrubbing a kitchen or vacuuming a hallway stops being a minor chore and becomes an exhausting hurdle. On November 2, 2026, Bunzl Canada reported that 25 volunteers from its Cleaning & Hygiene teams partnered with ISSA Canada and local professional cleaning crews to provide free home cleanings for 20 cancer patients and their families across Toronto, Edmonton, Vancouver and Montreal.

The volunteer days supported Cleaning for a Reason, an ISSA Charities initiative marking 20 years in Canada. Bunzl supplied the equipment, products and meals while professional cleaners led the teams on site. It is a quiet reminder that the skills commercial cleaners rely on every shift-spotting what others miss and leaving a room calmer than they found it-carry extraordinary weight when a household needs relief.

Source: Cleaning for a Reason (November 2, 2026)

The Locked Boardroom on Floor 14 - Part 1

At 10:40 p.m. on a rainy Thursday in downtown Toronto, Nadia had twenty minutes left on her evening office route. Floor 14 belonged to a mid-sized engineering firm whose executives had spent the entire week behind closed glass doors. Every night, Nadia's checklist for the main boardroom was identical: wipe the walnut table, sanitize the conference phone, empty the desk-side bins and check the confidential-paper console by the credenza.

That night, the boardroom door was propped open by a heavy brass doorstop-unusual for a floor that normally locked up tightly by seven. Inside, half-finished coffee mugs lined the table and a thick cream courier envelope sat wedged halfway into the recycling bin instead of the locked shred box beside it. Nadia paused before bagging the bin. Printed across the front of the unsealed envelope in bold red ink were three words: FINAL TENDER - CONFIDENTIAL.

A small flash drive had slipped out of the envelope and was resting under a crumpled napkin at the bottom of the bin. Nadia knew the cardinal rule of commercial office cleaning: never read client documents, never pocket anything, and never guess whether something belongs in the garbage when it clearly looks important. She pulled out her shift phone to log an incident note-and heard the elevator chime down the hall.

Footsteps moved quickly toward the boardroom. A man in a soaked trench coat with no visible building pass appeared in the doorway, breathing hard, and pointed straight at the recycling bin. 'Thank goodness,' he said, stepping inside. 'I left an envelope in here an hour ago-just hand it over and I'll get out of your hair.' Nadia kept both hands on her cart handle. She had cleaned Floor 14 for three years, and she had never seen this man before in her life.

To be continued in next month's issue (The Locked Boardroom on Floor 14 - Part 2).

Fictional story

Ontario proposes broader workplace recycling duties and simpler waste audits



Ontario is consulting on regulatory updates that would reshape how commercial and institutional buildings handle recycling and waste reporting, according to REMI Network's November 2, 2026 report in Canadian Property Management. Public comments remain open until November 26, 2026, and the changes are still proposals rather than finalized rules.

Under the proposed framework, covered workplaces-including offices, retail plazas, schools, hospitals, restaurants and hotels meeting coverage thresholds-would separate a wider range of plastic packaging, beverage containers and paper products, backed by clearer record-keeping obligations. At the same time, the province proposes removing mandatory waste-reduction work plans and narrowing the scope of formal waste audits to reduce administrative paperwork.

The consultation also flags stronger oversight of waste contractors so that properly separated recyclables are not mixed back into landfill-bound loads after pickup.

Why it matters: In GTA office towers and commercial facilities, cleaning crews are the ones who actually empty desk-side streams and stage bags at loading docks. Facility managers should review bin labelling, bag-colour coding and contractor pickup records now so teams are ready if the proposals take effect.

Source: REMI Network - Canadian Property Management (November 2, 2026) - https://www.reminetwork.com/articles/recycling-review-promises-paperwork-relief/

SECTION 4 - ARELLI ON SOCIAL MEDIA

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LINKEDIN

A Winter Morning at a Shared Office: Making the Cleaning Handover Work

How entrance mat checks, slush response and clear shift handovers keep shared Ontario offices clean and safe before 9 a.m.

INSTAGRAM

Why Office Washroom Odours Keep Returning-and What to Check First

Separating routine surface cleaning from floor drains, grout lines and ventilation issues that require building maintenance.

FACEBOOK

School and Training-Centre Cleaning in Toronto: A Practical Facility Checklist

A room-by-room guide covering high-touch desks, shared classrooms, washrooms and predictable after-hours schedules.

TIKTOK

Medical Office Cleaning in Toronto: High-Touch Areas and Written Procedures

Why waiting rooms, exam-room touchpoints and documented dwell times matter in busy healthcare clinics.

X

Janitorial Supplies and Restroom Readiness for Mississauga Workplaces

Practical restocking checkpoints that stop soap, paper towel and dispenser run-outs before midday traffic peaks.

ISSA wins U.S. Labor approval for first frontline Cleaning Technician apprenticeship



The U.S. Department of Labor has approved ISSA as the first registered apprenticeship sponsor for the Cleaning Technician occupation, according to an ISSA announcement on November 4, 2026. The association describes the initiative as the first nationally recognized registered apprenticeship built specifically for frontline commercial cleaning workers.

Rather than relying on informal shadowing, the program blends structured classroom instruction with supervised on-the-job training across workplace safety, infection prevention and commercial standards. Apprentices earn a portable credential paired with progressive wage increases and a defined pathway into supervisory roles.

ISSA plans to launch its initial cohort of roughly 20 apprentices on December 1, 2026, with five pilot employers-including Goodwill Industries Southern California, Melwood Enterprises and Verde Clean-participating in the first wave.

Why it matters: High staff turnover is the biggest operational headache in commercial cleaning on both sides of the border. Even though this credential is U.S.-registered, Canadian and Ontario cleaning companies can borrow the same blueprint: structured onboarding, documented skills progression and visible paths to lead-hand roles keep reliable cleaners longer.

Source: ISSA (November 4, 2026) - https://www.issa.com/articles/issa-approved-by-us-department-of-labor-as-first-sponsor-of-cleaning-technician-registered-apprenticeship/

Stop winter salt film before it reaches the elevators: vacuum mats before you mop



WHAT TO DO

At every main and loading-dock entrance during snow and slush weather, thoroughly vacuum or extract the walk-off mats first, then damp-mop the hard floor beyond them with a neutral or salt-neutralizing cleaner.

HOW TO DO IT CORRECTLY

Start by running a commercial upright or wet-dry vacuum slowly lengthwise and crosswise over the entrance mats to pull out trapped sand and rock salt. If a mat is waterlogged, extract the standing slush before touching the tile. Next, mix a fresh bucket of salt-neutralizing solution (never plain hot water alone), mop the first four to six metres inside the doors, and swap out the solution the moment it turns cloudy.

WHY IT MATTERS

Once an entrance mat is saturated with brine and grit, it stops trapping debris and starts acting like a sponge that stamps salt onto every shoe entering the lobby. That white alkaline film dulls floor finish, scratches vinyl and stone, and creates slip hazards near elevator banks.

COMMON MISTAKE TO AVOID

Mopping the lobby floor while leaving a soaked, gritty walk-off mat right in front of the door. Within thirty minutes of foot traffic, the white haze returns and the shift's floor work is undone.