



The “Greening” of Mint Dental Works

Dr. Jason McMillan—Portland, OR

It isn't every day that Henry Schein's specialists have the opportunity to contribute their talents to creating the first LEED-approved—certifiably “green”—dental office in the United States.

As the green revolution gradually gains momentum globally, impacting everything from food production to fuel alternatives, the time has come to cultivate a new attitude regarding first making use of recyclable and green options before choosing products that do not support the idea of environmental protection and the reuse of existing materials.

Mint Dental Works in Portland, Oregon has drawn the spotlight with a style and mission that fully endorses the go-green movement. Dr. Jason McMillan wanted a practice that would be convenient for his existing patients, could handle future growth, and would support his vision for a sustainably constructed office. “My wife, Rebecca, and I interviewed architects and consultants to find a design team that could create an inspired, environmentally conscious space,” notes Dr. McMillan.

The Doctor's long-standing relationship with Sales Consultant Scott Cook and Equipment Specialist Jim Hammon provided the expertise and support needed to carry the project forward. “Jim...helped us solidify our choice with preliminary drawings. [His] training as an architect was also key in the project's success...[and his] experience with previous dental office design projects and...understanding of equipment layout was also paramount to the functionality of our new space. He researched environmentally friendly equipment and materials and pricing scenarios...and was also instrumental in the design of our custom dental cabinetry,” remarks the Doctor.

Rebecca McMillan was familiar with the rating system used by the U.S. Green Building Council's Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design Program (LEED), which is the nationally recognized standard for green buildings. The next leg of the journey would be concerned with LEED's input regarding the new office. To become certified, projects must earn “points” within each of LEED's five categories: sustainable site development, water savings, energy efficiency, materials selection, and indoor environmental quality.



“We were excited to employ LEED strategies and knew that it would help us incorporate a wide range of ideas into our project,” comments Dr. McMillan.

“Field Sales Consultant Scott Cook, Equipment Service Tech/Project Coordinator Dan Sands, and Pelton & Crane Specialist Dave Anderson also contributed their skills to the presentation and selection of the dental equipment,” adds Jim Hammon. “Pelton & Crane was a terrific partner in the project. I hope this experience in a LEED-certified clinic will inspire them and other equipment manufacturers to explore, engineer, and produce more earth-friendly...choices and products.”

Mint Dental Works is now housed in a renovated 1950’s building recreated for high-end retail. Its location offers favorable exposure because of its proximity to the city’s downtown—plus, the complex’s adjacent tenants bring walk-in business to the office. The renovation gave the building an attractive facade, introduced native landscaping, and maintained the original 26-ft., barrel-vault ceilings with exposed wood bow trusses. The eclectic design mix used in the space makes an outstanding and memorable architectural statement.

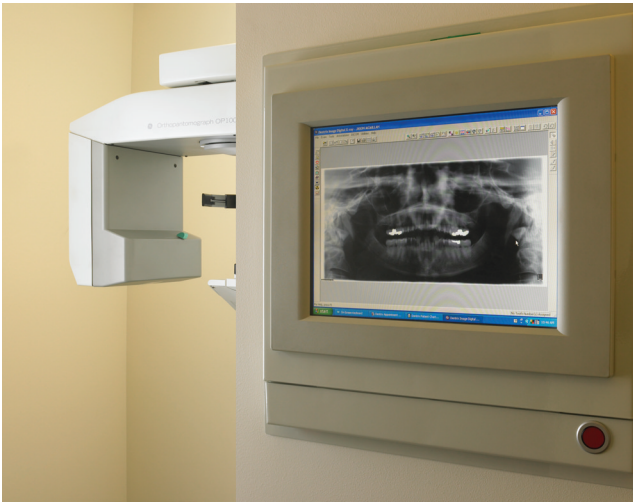




“One of the most exciting aspects of our project was our commitment to work salvaged products into the design of our space. Our finds included 13 vintage fir doors and 8 windows—which we stripped and refinished ourselves. A number of items came from a school built in 1910 in the Seattle area. The school was torn down because it did not meet seismic requirements,” comments the Doctor. The items recovered from the schoolhouse include a slate chalkboard that can be found in the reception area; an antique science cupboard now used in the Doctor’s office; several desks; and all clocks in the operatories.

Additional historical architectural elements are scattered throughout the clinic, including beautifully worked iron return-air grates; reclaimed tongue-and-groove fir paneling, which graces the facade of the reception desk; and vintage

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light fixtures reworked for compact fluorescents. “Our patients are impressed by the ways old objects have found new life in different applications, and we’re proud of the unique and beautiful character that we have created in our space,” remarks Dr. McMillan.

The same charm and innovativeness in using salvaged materials is exhibited in the consultation room where the base from an industrial sewing machine has been fashioned into a table. The Doctor’s favorite reclamation of vintage objects is the salvaged rosette tiles that adorn the wall of the beverage center.

“When salvaged materials weren’t utilized, we selected the most environmentally sound options,” adds the Doctor. Examples of this conscious effort toward green-level product conservancy include the front office’s walnut flooring that contains FSC-certified wood products harvested from a well-managed forest; commercial-grade carpet tiles designated green-label plus—tested for low chemical emissions; and recycled materials for countertops and all seating fabrics. Many of the patients have commented on the lack of “new construction smell” in the office. The selection of low-voc paints, adhesives, sealants, fabrics, and flooring materials has had a noticeable impact on the air quality in the office.

The commitment to use all sustainable materials for Mint Dental Works resulted in the need to research green alternatives for dental offices. Green options for prefabricated dental cabinetry provided a challenge, which was solved by choosing custom cabinetry made and constructed locally with 100% pre-consumer recycled wood-fiber particleboard with no urea formaldehyde added during the manufacturing process.

Equipment choices also reflected the dedication to green the office. The concerted effort to minimize the use of natural resources led the Doctor to incorporate products such as a handheld portable X-ray gun and a digital software system to reduce paper consumption and eliminate the dependency on harmful chemicals for photo processing.

Multiple ways were found to save water as well. The facility uses a dry evacuation system, sensor-operated faucets, low-flow fixtures, and dual-flush toilets in restrooms. Alcohol-based hand rub in each operatory eliminated the need for medical-grade sinks, faucets, water, soap, and paper towels. An amazing 200,000 gallons of water are saved per year by adhering to the alternatives used by Mint Dental Works.



"It feels good coming to work every day in a space that reflects my values personally and professionally and having a larger community embrace that vision," says Dr. McMillan. "Nearly everyone who visits our space is surprised by its warm and textured atmosphere. Many of our patients seek us out because of our commitment to lightening our environmental footprint and our reputation for exceptional patient care. For the staff, the new space is a facility they can be proud of. Although it is exciting that our practice will be the first LEED-certified dental office in the [U.S], what ultimately means the most to me...is our ability to provide extraordinary comprehensive care for our patients in the healthiest possible environment."

Mint Dental Works has made groundbreaking history by using the "green" perspective for the dental office. Henry Schein Dental's specialists have helped bring to fruition an effort that will become a standard in the industry, and has also proven to be a creative and ingenious way to merge the materials of the past with the technology of the present in a harmonious and environmentally respectful way.





Left to right; Lee Lehman, Regional Manager; Jim Hammon, Equipment Sales Specialist; Dr. Jason McMillan; Scott Cook, Field Sales Consultant; and Greg Hirsch, Regional Operations Manager



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