



# The Essential Facility Maintenance Guide For Managers



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As a facility manager, you have a long list of responsibilities, including facility maintenance. As with every other one of your tasks, some strategies can make maintaining the facility easier.

Incorporate the following six facility maintenance strategies, and you will notice an improvement in your efficiency and a reduction in operational costs.

## 1 USE CMMS SOFTWARE AND TECHNOLOGY FOR BETTER EFFICIENCY

One of the most important strategies for improving efficiency will always be to use technology to your advantage. In the case of facility maintenance, [CMMS \(computerized maintenance management system\)](#) software is one of the best tools you can have up your sleeves.

Generally speaking, this tool will help you manage assets, track work orders, and schedule maintenance. You can use the system to optimize your use of equipment, which we will go into in more detail in the next strategic recommendation.

From an efficiency standpoint, a CMMS software can help you keep track of the tools and equipment available to complete maintenance. Moreover, it can help you schedule when you will need to use various items so that you can do so efficiently.

## Key Parts of CMMS Software

There are a few [key elements of CMMS software](#) that you will want to take advantage of to maximize your facility maintenance efficiency.

- **Asset Registry and Management**  
Your CMMS lets you easily manage information about your assets. This includes factors such as the manufacturer and model, associated costs, location, performance, and more.
- **Inventory and Material Management**  
In addition to managing assets, you can use the software to manage inventory and materials used for facility maintenance.
- **Labor Management**  
This function lets you track your facility maintenance team, as well as their certifications for varying pieces of equipment. You can use it to assign crews or tasks, manage shifts, and even manage pay rates.
- **Work Order Management**  
For many facility managers, managing work orders is the primary reason to use CMMS software. In fact, this is so important that it requires a closer look.
- **Preventative Maintenance**  
You can automatically set up your CMMS to create work orders for preventative maintenance. You will likely have the option to do so based on triggered events, usage, or time. This prevents the risk of forgetting about preventative maintenance.
- **Analysis and Reporting**  
Your CMMS will contain a large amount of data. You can use that data to generate reports related to various aspects of facility maintenance. From there, you can analyze the reports to optimize aspects of maintenance.



## **A Closer Look at Work Order Management**

Because work order management is an important function of your CMMS software, it is worth looking at in more detail.

*When tracking the work orders, you can store information about:*

- The order number
- Codes for causes or solutions
- Descriptions of the issue
- The priority level
- Whether the order is for repairs, replacements, or scheduled
- What people and assets are assigned or used

*You can also perform the following functions related to work orders with your CMMS:*

- Attach documentation, safety materials, and repair information
- Record the planned costs compared with the actual costs
- Track the downtime
- Review the status
- Schedule the facility maintenance team
- Reserve the materials
- Automate the generation of work orders

## **How CMMS Boosts Efficiency**

The ability to complete each of the above tasks with the CMMS boosts your efficiency by streamlining many of your tasks. You don't have to use multiple different programs to track various information related to work orders. The fact that you don't have to switch programs boosts efficiency significantly. You also get a boost in efficiency because you don't have to compare programs carefully to ensure they are compatible with each other.

## 2 MANAGE ASSETS, EQUIPMENT, AND INVENTORY EFFECTIVELY

Additionally, your best strategy to manage assets, equipment, and inventory as a facility manager will likely be with a CMMS. The system will help you track basic features, specifications, and availability of the facility maintenance equipment.

### What Information You Can Manage

*Just some of the information that you can track and manage for your assets includes:*

- Manufacturer and model
- Location
- Associated costs
- Associated codes
- Associated documents, including repair manuals, warranties, and safety procedures
- Performance statistics
- Downtime statistics
- Internet of Things connectivity

### How CMMS and Tech Helps You Manage Assets, Equipment, and Inventory

CMMS will be the best way to manage assets, equipment, and inventory. Specifically, using this type of software for this purpose gives you the following benefits:

- The ability to stay on top of preventative maintenance for assets, equipment, and inventory via automatic work orders
- Reducing the risk of breakdowns and the need for repairs or downtime via preventative maintenance
- Extending the lifespan of equipment via preventative maintenance
- Improved safety via preventative maintenance, reactive maintenance, and tracking the certifications of facility maintenance staff
- The ability to maintain assets, equipment, and inventory via work orders
- Keeping all of the relevant records for all the assets, inventory, and equipment in a single program
- Collecting data on your equipment, inventory, and assets – including productivity, use, downtime, and more
- Reducing operational costs via improved efficiency and reduced need for repairs



### 3

## BUILD OUT A FACILITIES MAINTENANCE TEAM ACCORDING TO BEST HIRING PRACTICES

Another crucial aspect of your facility maintenance is creating a team to tackle all relevant tasks. Savvy facility managers will familiarize themselves with the best hiring practices to ensure that they assemble the right team for facility maintenance.

### Decide If You Want a Full-time or Freelance Team

One of the first things to think about as you hire your facilities maintenance team is whether you need a full-time team or do fine with a freelance maintenance person or company. As a general rule of thumb, if your building is large, it will likely make sense to have at least one full-time maintenance technician on your team. If your building is smaller, a freelancer may be good enough. In that case, you can also hire a facility maintenance company to handle it. Hiring a company may also make it easier to adjust to changing needs. For example, if you temporarily need extra maintenance staff, you could easily do so through a company instead of hiring each person yourself individually.

### Hiring Individuals vs. a Company

A follow-up consideration will be whether you prefer to hire individual maintenance staff or [hire a maintenance company](#).

Hiring an individual gives you complete control over who will work on your building. It also ensures that the same person will always be maintaining your building. This helps them get familiar with your facility's needs and makes it easier to track potential issues or the need for preventative maintenance.

By contrast, hiring a company saves you the hassle of interviewing and finding candidates. You also don't have to worry about offering the facility maintenance person benefits, as the company you hire will do so. It is also easier to find a replacement if the usual person cannot come into work. After all, the company will have plenty of other staff to send as a replacement. The downside is that you can't control who works on your building, and you may not have the same person every day.

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## Where to Post Your Listing

If you choose to hire a facilities maintenance team yourself instead of going through a company, you will have to post the job listings somewhere. The following are some good options to consider when recruiting maintenance staff:

- Post signs in the building and around the community, such as community bulletin boards
- Post on general job listing websites
- Post on local job listing websites
- Ask current staff for recommendations
- Talk to other local facility managers (this is an especially good option if you don't need a full-time facility maintenance person, as they could split their time between your facilities)

## What to Look for in Candidates

You will want the same general traits in a [facility maintenance team](#) as you would for any other role. This comes down to experience and reliability.

Experience is especially important for facility maintenance, as many of their tasks will directly influence the safety of the occupants of the building. As such, they should also be familiar with safety regulations.

Any facility maintenance experience is a good sign, but it is even better if they have experience with your particular type of building. So, if you manage a warehouse, look for someone with warehouse maintenance experience. If you manage a residential building, look for experience with that type of property.

You will also want to confirm that your chosen team is organized and knows how to prioritize tasks. Moreover, it is smart to choose someone familiar with the CMMS software you use. At the very least, they should have experience with another program and be a quick learner.

## 4

# IMPLEMENT A PREVENTATIVE MAINTENANCE STRATEGY

We've already touched on preventative maintenance as part of the other points, but facility managers also need to have a solid strategy regarding this type of maintenance.

### Common Tasks Included in Preventative Maintenance

The same tasks that are part of [preventative maintenance will depend on the asset or equipment](#) in question. Some common examples include the following:

- Inspect the equipment
- Clean the equipment, building, and grounds
- Replace or repair damaged equipment parts
- Lubricate any moving parts of systems
- Adjust controls on systems

### Why Do You Need Preventative Maintenance?

It is worth reinforcing why preventative maintenance is so important to your role as a facility manager. Staying on top of this type of facilities maintenance will reflect well on your abilities to manage the facility by offering the following benefits:

- Extend the lifespan of equipment and system
- Improve the reliability of equipment
- Increase safety by ensuring equipment runs properly
- Maximize your ability to use resources
- Reduce the need for [unplanned inspections and maintenance](#)
- [Catch potential issues early](#)
- Prevent potential issues
- Improve efficiency and productivity
- [Reduce costs](#)
- Comply with audits
- Lets you plan repairs to help in managing your budget



## Understand How to Schedule Preventative Maintenance

When it comes to scheduling preventative maintenance, you will have to consider several main types of schedule. Some things will require maintenance based on time, while others will require it based on usage.

One example of time-based maintenance is [your facility's HVAC system](#). You will need to schedule two inspections a year, and your technician will likely suggest one before winter and again before summer. Time-based maintenance may be daily, weekly, monthly, annually, or at another interval.

Maintenance based on usage is also sometimes called meter-based. A classic example of this would be when a light comes on in your car, indicating you need to check something. For facility maintenance, it may be something such as inspecting a belt after so many hours of production.

## How to Create a Preventative Maintenance Schedule

One of the most important parts of your preventative maintenance strategy is creating a schedule for it. Keep the following tips in mind as you do so:

- When in doubt, consult your experienced [maintenance team](#)
- Think about your goals for the facility overall
- Prioritize the equipment and assets
- Estimate the cost of downtime or damage to the asset
- Determine what resources, including labor, are necessary for the maintenance
- Develop long and short-term plans
- Evaluate the maintenance schedule and readjust it as many times as necessary



## 5 REDUCE OPERATIONAL COST FOR ALL BUILDINGS

One of your many responsibilities as a facility manager is to manage the budget and reduce costs whenever possible. The good news is that simply by staying on top of facility maintenance, you are already well on your way to doing this.

### How Facility Maintenance Reduces Operational Costs

Throughout the guide, we've already touched on several ways that facility maintenance helps [reduce operational costs](#). To start, it extends the lifespan of your assets and equipment. Any time you extend the lifespan, you reduce the cost per year of a given piece of equipment.

Maintaining the facility also helps prevent issues and gives your [maintenance team](#) the chance to catch potential issues early. Both of these factors help prevent unexpected expenses. Remember that small problems with an easy, affordable solution get worse and more expensive to fix over time.

Facility maintenance also lets you plan your budget better. This gives you the opportunity to spread costs out over time. For example, if you know you will have to replace the HVAC system soon, you can plan to save other major repairs for another year.

### Other Ways to Reduce Operational Costs

In addition to the inherent benefits of facility maintenance for operational costs, you can follow these strategies:

- Ensure your [facility maintenance team](#) is well-trained
- Reduce the response time to maintenance requests
- Track the work order history for assets so that you can plan maintenance
- Automate scheduling preventative maintenance so it does not get skipped
- Use technology, like CMMS software, to your advantage
- Optimize temperature, [lighting](#), and HVAC factors during regular maintenance

## 6 DETERMINE IF AND WHEN TO HIRE FACILITIES MAINTENANCE

We already discussed strategies for [hiring facility maintenance](#), but how do you know when you need to hire someone? The simple answer is if you and your current team cannot handle preventative and reactive maintenance, you need to hire someone to take care of it. But it can be more complicated than this.

### **Consider Your Building's Needs**

Start by considering the needs for maintaining the facilities you manage. Compare this with the free time you have and the time other team members have available. If there are more tasks than time, you should hire facilities maintenance. But don't just think about time. Consider how else you (or your team) could use that time. If you weren't working on maintenance, would you be doing something more important? The answer is likely yes, and that means you should hire someone.

### **Consider the Required Skills**

You also need to think about the skills required to perform the necessary maintenance. Is someone on your team comfortable performing all of the preventative and reactive maintenance tasks? If not, how easy are those tasks to learn? And would it be worth learning them?

It is typically smarter to hire someone with experience in a particular task. The best facility maintenance team will be well-rounded so that they can handle all of your buildings' needs.

### **Consider the Costs**

Finally, think about the costs associated with a facilities maintenance team. Then compare that to the cost of your current maintenance. If you currently handle the maintenance yourself, factor in your hourly pay and how much time you spend on it. If someone else on the team currently handles it, make the same calculations for their wages.

## **CONCLUSION**

Developing facility maintenance strategies will help you work more effectively and efficiently as a facility manager. You will find the buildings running more efficiently with a reduced need for repairs and a lowered safety risk. You will even find savings in your operational costs. These six strategies will put you well on your way to successfully managing maintenance for your facilities.



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