

CLEAN INSIDE AND OUT

Charles Frost—Temple Construction Missionary



There are many examples of what a clean project means.

Building a temple is very different from any other construction project. One thing that affected all subcontractors was a specification from the Temple Department that the project be kept clean all of the time. There are many examples of what a clean project means.

After the soil and rock were excavated from the lower level, the earth-moving subcontractor was required to use compressed air to blow all loose dirt and bits of rock from the exposed lava. The underlying rock had to be absolutely clean before construction began. The temple started on clean bedrock.

Clean fill was then placed on the rough lava to make a level base. Someone said that clean fill was an oxymoron. It isn't. The earth-moving subcontractor was required to bring fill that was free from grass, weeds, tree roots, and any trash. The fill was then compacted to provide the base on which the concrete footings and foundations for the temple were placed.

Once the lower-level concrete walls were completed, the earth-moving subcontractor had to remove all globs of concrete, form wires, nails, short pieces of reinforcing steel, lunch sacks, and pop cans that had accumulated next to the foundation walls. They even used magnets to pull buried nails and wire from the dirt. Clean fill was then used for foundation backfill.

After the concrete floors of the temple were poured, full-time laborers were hired to sweep the floors and throw out the trash. The subcontractors installing interior walls, electrical wiring, duct work, and piping said they had never worked on a project that was kept so clean during construction. They understood this building was to be a temple. Laborers vacuumed the floors before the steel studs were installed and then vacuumed again before enclosing the walls with sheetrock so that the temple walls are clean even on the inside.

The wind often blows on the Rexburg bench. By the spring of 2007, wind-blown soil had accumulated on the exterior of the temple, turning

the white walls a tannish brown. Soil had accumulated in the porous surface of the “china white” precast concrete panels. The contractor power washed the entire exterior of the temple and sealed the pristine surface with water proofing. Now when soil accumulates on the exterior walls, the next rain will wash the temple clean.

Subcontractors were not allowed to sign their completed work. Any graffiti was quickly removed. During inspection of the steel supports of the steeple base, the initials of a welder were found high up in an almost inaccessible space. The initials identified the welder, and he had to climb into the tower to grind off the initials. Names were also erased or ground off concrete and sheetrock walls. Only the name of the Lord is to be connected with the temple.

Temple cleanliness symbolizes the ideal for those who enter to participate in sacred ordinances. Purifying our lives through the atonement of Jesus Christ makes us clean inside and out when we enter the House of the Lord. ∞

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