

2026 Trend Report: Colorado

Reliability, visibility, and partnership
for facilities in the Mountain West



We're here for Colorado

Colorado continues to attract advanced industries, maintain high-value public institutions, and serve as a strategic gateway for the Mountain West. At the same time, growth is becoming more measured, labor markets are tighter, and expectations for facility performance are rising.

In Denver and across the state, we're seeing facilities leaders stretched: to operate longer hours, meet stricter regulatory standards, and perform reliably under increasing pressure on infrastructure, staffing, and energy systems.

Commercial real estate is adjusting to new occupancy patterns. Distribution and food manufacturing continue to expand. Aerospace, defense, and life science environments demand precision, security, and compliance at the highest levels.

Our teams sit at the center of these shifts in the Centennial State. From GMP-regulated manufacturing floors and secure aerospace facilities to Class A office buildings, healthcare campuses, and large distribution hubs, we help clients maintain continuity while preparing for what's next.

The future of facility performance across the Front Range and surrounding areas will be defined by reliability, visibility, and partnership. Organizations that succeed will treat facilities not as overhead, but as mission-critical infrastructure—planned, staffed, and operated with discipline.

This report draws on firsthand insights from our local teams and the clients we support every day. It highlights the trends we believe will shape facility strategy across the state in 2026 and beyond.



Scott Salmirs

Scott Salmirs
President & CEO, ABM Industries

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Reliability, visibility, and partnership

How Colorado facilities are adapting to compliance and performance pressures

Josh Martinez and James Fair
ABM Colorado Region

Colorado is entering a new phase. Now in the second half of the decade, economic momentum remains steady, but the conditions surrounding facility operations are becoming more complex. Growth is no longer defined by rapid expansion alone. Labor constraints, infrastructure pressure, and tighter operational tolerances are reshaping how buildings are planned, operated, and maintained across industries.

Denver and the Front Range continue to anchor Colorado's economy, supported by strong public-sector employment, healthcare systems, higher education, and a nationally significant aerospace and defense presence.

Commercial real estate is adjusting to lasting changes in how space is used. Elevated office vacancy has accelerated a clear flight to quality, concentrating demand in Class A, amenity-rich buildings while placing pressure on older assets to adapt. Facility leaders must now balance cost discipline with the need to maintain tenant experience, safety, and long-term asset value—often across portfolios that are larger and more complex than before.

Distribution centers and food and beverage facilities are scaling quickly, managing higher throughput, stricter sanitation requirements, and more complex equipment. This heightened intensity means reliability and consistency matter as much as speed. Transparent, accessible documentation has become a core operational requirement.

Across regulated environments—from **life science labs to advanced manufacturing and aerospace**—facility performance is inseparable from compliance. Cleanliness, environmental control, access management, and audit readiness are foundational to daily operations. Facilities that lack disciplined processes or proof of performance face heightened risk as scrutiny increases.

External pressures are adding another layer of complexity. New state and local regulations—particularly around waste diversion—are moving from voluntary goals to enforceable standards, requiring more structured, data-driven approaches.

What we hear consistently from Colorado organizations is a desire for fewer vendors, clearer accountability, and partners who reduce complexity rather than add to it. Facility managers are overseeing broader portfolios with fewer internal resources, leaving little margin for error. Reliability, visibility, and proactive problem-solving are no longer differentiators. They are baseline expectations.

The organizations best positioned for Colorado's next phase will have aligned facility operations with core business needs. Our team has identified where that shift is already underway and, crucially, how leading organizations should respond.

Josh Martinez is the Senior Branch Manager for ABM Industries in Colorado, overseeing manufacturing, distribution, and business and industry operations. Managing mission-critical environments has given him a deep understanding of the discipline, precision, and trust required to run facilities where performance and security are non-negotiable.

Jim Fair is Director of Sales for ABM in the West, specializing in manufacturing and distribution. With nearly 30 years of experience in the industry, Jim works closely with operators and decision-makers to align facility strategies with operational needs and long-term growth.

About this report

Grounded in market data and firsthand client engagement across industries, the ABM Colorado team has identified the trends shaping the state's future—equipping organizations to make more informed, strategic decisions for 2026 and beyond.

Our **1,285+ team members** in Colorado are dedicated to providing maintenance to **282 facilities**, including the Denver Civic Center, Medline, BAE Systems, Shamrock Food Service, and IBM.



MANUFACTURING & DISTRIBUTION

50+ facilities serviced



DATA CENTERS

7 data centers serviced and counting



HVAC & MECHANICAL

250+ heating and cooling systems serviced and maintained



FOOD & BEVERAGE

1.35M sq. ft. sanitized daily

1,285+

Colorado ABM employees

47M

Total sq. ft. of buildings serviced

138

Clients proudly served

282

Facilities proudly served

Trend 1: Commercial Real Estate focuses on fewer, higher-performing assets

Colorado's commercial real estate is recalibrating. Vacancy remains elevated across much of the Denver metro area, but performance has become increasingly uneven. Rather than a broad decline, demand is concentrating in Class A, amenity-rich buildings located in desirable, walkable submarkets.

For these higher-performing assets, expectations are rising. Tenants want offices that feel reliable, clean, and responsive. These spaces must justify the commute and support collaboration. Facilities play a central role in delivering that experience, influencing everything from first impressions to daily productivity.

Portfolio managers are overseeing more buildings with fewer internal resources. This shift places greater reliance on facility partners to provide consistency, visibility, and proactive issue identification. Reactive service models are no longer sufficient when managers cannot be onsite every day.

Lower-performing and older office assets face a different challenge. With tighter budgets and longer

FOR DECISION MAKERS:

As reliability and performance increasingly shape asset value, take action. Prioritize high-performing sites, right-size legacy buildings, standardize operations across your portfolio, and align with proactive facility partners.

lease-up timelines, owners are exploring right-sized service models, selective upgrades, and new approaches to maintain safety and asset value, while adapting to reduced occupancy.

As the year unfolds, our teams are planning for:

Increased service models segmentation, with Class A assets emphasizing tenant experience while legacy buildings adopt flexible programs that balance cost control with baseline safety and cleanliness standards.

Greater demand for portfolio-wide standardization that allows property managers to oversee multiple buildings efficiently without sacrificing performance, accountability, or communication across assets.

Closer integration between janitorial, engineering, and tenant experience teams to ensure offices are responsive to occupant needs and professionally managed in competitive submarkets.

Understanding how current assets meet the specific needs of the market can lead to greater absorption and long-term tenant satisfaction.



Trend 2: Distribution and food & beverage facilities scale to meet higher demands

Today, Colorado acts as a critical node in commerce. The capital's proximity to I-70, I-25, and I-76, combined with Denver International Airport's expanding cargo footprint, positions the Front Range as a preferred hub for food distribution, grocery supply chains, and multi-state fulfillment operations serving Colorado, Wyoming, Utah, and beyond.

Much of the recent growth is concentrated in newer facilities built within the last decade, particularly near Commerce City, the airport submarket, and major interstate corridors. These sites are larger, faster, and more automated than legacy warehouses, placing greater operational demands on facility systems and frontline teams from day one.

Food and beverage distribution adds another layer of complexity. Facilities often manage frozen, refrigerated, and ambient environments under one roof, each with distinct sanitation protocols, temperature tolerances, and regulatory expectations. High throughput and continuous operations leave little room for inconsistency. Small breakdowns in cleanliness, documentation, or staffing stability can cascade quickly across supply chains.

As these operations scale, the burden hits facility teams hardest. Manual, paper-based sanitation tracking struggles to keep pace with audit requirements and customer expectations. Workforce availability and retention remain persistent challenges in multi-shift environments, making consistency harder to maintain as volume grows.

Automation and electrified material-handling systems are accelerating throughput but also raising the stakes. Facilities now require tighter coordination between janitorial, engineering, safety, and operations teams to prevent downtime, protect food safety, and maintain regulatory compliance.

In 2026, the Colorado ABM team anticipates:

Expanded sanitation programs designed specifically for frozen, refrigerated, and dry distribution zones, with frequencies and materials aligned to food safety and regulatory requirements.

Increased adoption of digital documentation platforms like ABM Connect™ to support audits, ensure quality assurance, and provide real-time transparency across high-throughput operations.

Greater focus on workforce retention and cross-training to maintain consistent sanitation and operational performance across shifts, sites, and seasonal demand fluctuations.

Many organizations are looking to contain complexity through facility partners that provide strategic planning and consolidated service offerings.



FOR DECISION MAKERS:

As distribution volume rises, consistency and coordination become make-or-break. Standardize sanitation by zone, digitize audit tracking, and partner strategically to protect safety and scale with confidence.

Trend 3:

Life science and GMP facilities demand precision and a paperless paper trail



Colorado’s life sciences expansion is redefining what “facility readiness” means. Advanced manufacturing, testing, and support environments are spreading beyond traditional research hubs into distributed, GMP-regulated facilities.

Along the Front Range, biotech firms, medical device manufacturers, pharmaceutical support operations, and specialty labs are scaling alongside aerospace, clean tech, and quantum research. This convergence pushes more facilities into regulated territory faster than legacy models were designed to support.

Unlike conventional commercial or industrial spaces, GMP-regulated environments in Colorado frequently operate within mixed-use campuses, retrofitted buildings, or shared portfolios. That reality introduces added complexity around airflow control, material handling, personnel movement, and documentation discipline. This is especially true when regulated and non-regulated spaces coexist under one roof.

Audit scrutiny is intensifying as regulators and customers expect greater transparency and consistency. In these environments, traceability, timing, and proof of execution are critical. Paper-based systems and fragmented documentation workflows can’t keep pace. As a result, facilities are moving toward digital GMP platforms that provide real-time visibility into cleaning activities, sign-offs, deviations, and corrective actions.

Executing in these environments requires specialized facility expertise. Teams must understand ISO classifications, approved materials, gowning protocols, chemical restrictions, and equipment certification requirements—and how those standards differ by space, process, and risk profile.

As regulated footprints expand across multiple sites, organizations are prioritizing standardization to reduce risk and simplify oversight through:

Broader adoption of digital GMP documentation systems that provide audit-ready visibility, reduce missed sign-offs, and support real-time oversight across regulated environments.

Increased demand for facility teams trained specifically in ISO-classified and GMP-regulated spaces with deep understanding of materials, procedures, and compliance requirements.

Greater standardization of GMP protocols across distributed campuses to ensure consistent execution, reduce risk, and simplify oversight for quality and operations teams.

It’s clear to us that the Mountain West’s position as a leader in innovation rests on its ability to continuously implement cutting-edge compliance.

FOR DECISION MAKERS:

Redefine facility readiness to keep pace with Colorado’s life sciences expansion. Advanced manufacturing, testing, and support environments are spreading beyond traditional research hubs into distributed, GMP-regulated facilities.

Trend 4:

Waste consulting and audits shift from sustainability to compliance

Colorado’s waste landscape is changing quickly, driven by statewide diversion mandates and an increasing number of city- and state-level ordinances that place direct responsibility on commercial building owners and operators.

What was once a sustainability goal is now becoming a regulated mandate, particularly for offices, campuses, healthcare facilities, and multi-tenant properties.

Unlike past efforts, today’s recycling rules demand proof—like contamination rates, diversion goals, and compliance records. Tenant-led or informal programs often fall short when enforcement and reporting are involved.

In 2026, waste audits are becoming the smart starting point. Facilities need to know what’s being thrown away, where contamination happens, and how current practices stack up against local rules. Without solid data, compliance stays reactive and hard to manage across multiple sites.

Facilities are responding by shifting waste management into a more structured discipline. Centralized waste stations, standardized signage, and clearer disposal pathways are replacing desk-side bins and ad hoc solutions. Facility teams are increasingly responsible for coordinating audits, implementing changes, training occupants, and monitoring ongoing performance—often across multiple buildings or campuses.

In 2026, expect to see:

Increased demand for comprehensive waste audits that establish clear baselines, identify contamination risks, and support compliance with evolving state and municipal regulations.

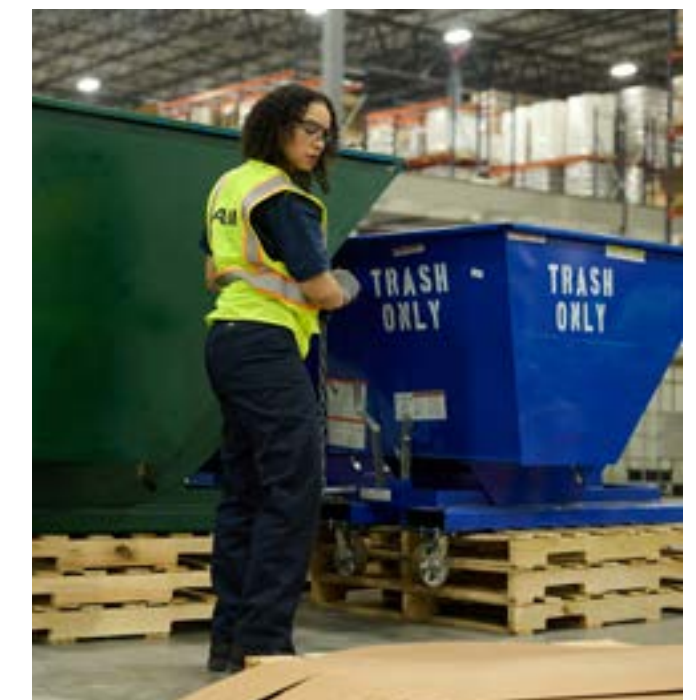
Broader implementation of centralized programs for trash, recycling, and composting designed to simplify disposal behavior and reduce contamination across multi-tenant environments.

Ongoing training and monitoring programs that support long-term compliance, rather than one-time fixes driven by enforcement or inspection deadlines.

Leading organizations know that staying ahead of an evolving regulatory environment requires a facility partner committed to their operation’s success.

FOR DECISION MAKERS:

Adapt facility operations to a waste landscape defined by regulation. Diversion mandates and local ordinances now require commercial properties to demonstrate measurable compliance, not just participation.



Trend 5: Aerospace and defense facilities elevate security and reliability standards

Colorado is command central for the nation’s aerospace and defense industries. With the U.S. Space Command headquartered in the state and a large concentration of Space Force operations and contractors nearby, Colorado has become a long-term hub for aerospace and defense activity. Facilities routinely support classified missions that demand consistency, security, and zero tolerance for disruption.

Unlike purely commercial environments, aerospace and defense facilities operate under layered requirements—classified access, export controls, GMP-like cleanliness standards, and mission readiness expectations that allow little tolerance for disruption. Secure manufacturing floors, satellite assembly areas, propulsion testing environments, and SCIFs must function flawlessly while maintaining strict separation between personnel, processes, and information.

Many of these environments also support advanced manufacturing and R&D, where particulate control, temperature stability, and documentation discipline directly impact production quality and program outcomes. The convergence of classified operations and precision manufacturing increases the complexity of daily facility execution, particularly when facilities span multiple security levels or program types.

As new space companies scale alongside established defense contractors, facility leaders are balancing rapid growth with uncompromising compliance. Organizations are increasingly seeking partners who can operate confidently inside secure environments—holding required clearances, understanding program-

specific restrictions, and navigating supplemental access protocols—without slowing operations or increasing administrative burden.

In 2026, we foresee:

Greater demand for clearance-capable facility personnel who can operate independently within secure environments while meeting strict compliance and documentation requirements.

Increased overlap between classified operations and GMP-regulated spaces, requiring facility teams with blended expertise across security, sanitation, and regulatory disciplines.

Continued focus on audit readiness, documentation accuracy, and zero-defect execution to support mission-critical aerospace and defense operations.

Facilities that require military-grade precision and discretion equally need facility partners who can attract and retain qualified personnel to deliver on objectives.



FOR DECISION MAKERS:

Aerospace and defense facilities leave no margin for error. Security, compliance, and reliability must be embedded into daily facility operations.



ABM Facility Solutions

Set new standards in cleanliness, comfort, and operational efficiency for your facility. Our team helps you earn trust with everyone who walks through your doors—treating your facility as if it were our own.

- Cleaning Services**
- Construction Clean Services**
- Support Services**
- Parking Services**
- Facilities Engineering**

ABM Operations & Maintenance

Get expert upkeep and support tailored to your facility’s unique needs. Our team not only keeps your systems running smoothly, but also helps enhance comfort for your occupants and uncovers new efficiencies that add lasting value.

- Mission Critical Solutions**
- Electrification**
- Electrical Services**



Onsite Insights: Q&A with Josh Martinez

What is most on the minds of ABM's Colorado clients? Here is an inside perspective.

Q Which industries are driving the most growth in Colorado right now?

A Manufacturing and distribution are driving growth right now, especially in food and beverage. New facilities are coming online fast. They're bigger, more automated, and far more complex than what we saw even ten years ago. Aerospace and defense are a steady presence. Less boom-and-bust. More long-term investment. What's interesting is where these worlds are starting to overlap.

Distribution facilities are facing tighter regulations. At the same time, aerospace environments are beginning to look more like GMP spaces. Across industries, facilities are being asked to run with more precision and fewer in-house teams. That shift is changing how organizations think about their facility partners.

Josh's detail-oriented approach has been shaped by years of managing projects where performance is a must. Today Josh holds an active Top Secret/Sensitive Compartmented Information clearance. When you meet him, ask about the Yankee Doodle Addendum.

Q How is the food and beverage distribution sector performing in Colorado?

A Colorado's location makes it a natural logistics hub for the Mountain West. Many food and beverage distribution centers here serve multiple states, not just local markets. That adds pressure from day one.

Inside the buildings, complexity stacks up fast. Frozen, refrigerated, and ambient zones run side by side. Often 24/7. In that kind of environment, there's little room for error.

A missed sanitation step, a gap in documentation, or high turnover on a shift: none of it stays contained. Small issues ripple through the operation. That's why discipline, workforce stability, and clear visibility have become essential to keeping these facilities running smoothly.

Q What are some unique challenges aerospace and defense clients face?

A Aerospace and defense facilities operate under a different set of expectations. Security clearances, controlled access, and classified spaces are just part of everyday work.

Many of these sites also overlap with GMP-regulated environments. That raises the bar even higher. There's more scrutiny, and less margin for error.

Facility partners are expected to understand clearance rules, documentation, and operational sensitivities from the start. No hand-holding. Clients want less risk and less administrative drag. They're looking for partners who can work confidently in secure spaces and spot issues before they become problems.

Q How mature is the aerospace ecosystem in Colorado?

A Colorado's aerospace ecosystem is well established and deeply tied to the state's economy. Longtime contractors operate alongside newer aerospace and space-adjacent companies that are growing fast.

That mix creates steady demand. It also adds complexity. Many facilities are supporting legacy infrastructure, classified programs, and newer high-spec environments at the same time. Sometimes all on the same campus.

The pace may vary from site to site. But expectations don't. Reliability, compliance, and execution are consistently high across the board.

Q Talk about commercial real estate.

A Stability and visibility come up in almost every conversation. Office vacancy is still high, and portfolio managers are covering more buildings with fewer resources. It's not unusual for one person to oversee four or five properties. That makes consistent onsite presence tough.

As a result, managers rely more on their facility partners. They need clear communication. And they need issues flagged early.

In this environment, cleanliness, safety, and responsiveness matter more than ever, especially as higher-performing buildings compete to attract and keep tenants.

Q How is ABM addressing concerns about turnover and continuity?

A Continuity has become a defining issue in Colorado. After years of leadership and management turnover, clients want to know who's accountable for their facilities. And they want confidence that those people will still be there next year.

It starts with visible, consistent local leadership. It continues with stable frontline teams. When clients see the same faces, clear communication, and follow-through over time, trust returns. That stability changes the relationship. It moves from transactional to collaborative. And in the end, outcomes improve on both sides.

Q *What role does technology play in winning new business?*

A Technology has become a real differentiator, especially in manufacturing and distribution. Many facilities still rely on paper logs for sanitation and compliance. That works for a while, until operations scale.

Digital platforms change the picture. They show what was done, when it happened, and who signed off. Often with photo documentation. Everything is visible in real time.

For clients managing multiple sites or shifts, that visibility matters. It cuts down on guesswork and oversight fatigue. And it lets teams focus on running the operation instead of chasing paperwork.

Q *Looking ahead to 2026, how would you characterize the Colorado market?*

A The market is steady, but expectations keep rising. Budgets are tighter. Tolerance for mistakes is lower. And clients are managing more complexity with fewer internal resources. Across industries, organizations want fewer vendors. They want partners who can do more—and do it reliably. With transparency.

The facilities that perform best are the ones that reduce friction. Clear communication. Consistent execution. Problems addressed before they escalate. Growth in Colorado isn't slowing. It's becoming more specialized. That puts a premium on disciplined, adaptable facility operations.

Q *What do clients typically discover once they really get to know ABM?*

A Most people are surprised by how broad—and how integrated—ABM really is. Many come in thinking of us as a janitorial provider. Then they realize we're also handling engineering, sanitation, energy, EV infrastructure, waste consulting, and compliance. All under one roof. That changes the conversation fast.

The other surprise is how involved we are day to day. We don't just execute tasks. We walk sites. We flag issues clients haven't seen. We help prioritize spend and bring solutions before problems escalate. For teams that are stretched thin, that kind of presence matters. It's less about adding another vendor. It's about gaining a partner who understands their buildings, their people, and the pressure they're under every day.

Q *How would you describe ABM's footprint across Colorado today?*

A It's statewide. Denver is the center of activity, but the work extends far beyond the metro—north toward Fort Collins, west to the Western Slope, and increasingly into secondary markets where industrial growth is accelerating. That reach matters because many clients are no longer operating single buildings; they're managing portfolios spread across the state.

What they expect is consistency—same standards, same communication, same accountability—regardless of location. As facilities activity spreads outward, having local leadership and operational depth across Colorado becomes less of a differentiator and more of a requirement.

Case Study Stabilizing operations and advancing automation for a Denver distribution center

When a Denver distribution center introduced a new automated tote system, they expected a significant boost in efficiency. Instead, high internal workforce turnover created operational gaps that threatened the entire rollout. To stabilize the facility and keep the transition on track, the organization partnered with ABM for rapid workforce support and operational oversight.

CHALLENGE

High turnover left the client short-staffed at the worst possible time. The facility needed large-scale tote assembly and barcode labeling to feed the automated production lines. Meanwhile, essential tasks like pallet sorting and tote cleaning were falling behind. These delays increased pressure on remaining employees, leading to significant overtime. There were growing concerns that the facility couldn't sustain the new automated workflow or keep pace with daily production demands.

SOLUTION

ABM stepped in with a dedicated production support team to tackle the backlog and restore order. To accelerate the launch, ABM deployed 35 employees to assemble and barcode new totes. By completing this project two days ahead of schedule, ABM helped the client recover time lost to staffing shortages.

With the immediate crisis resolved, ABM worked with site leadership to build a long-term operational support plan, including:

Pallet management: Oversight of sorting and storage to maintain daily throughput

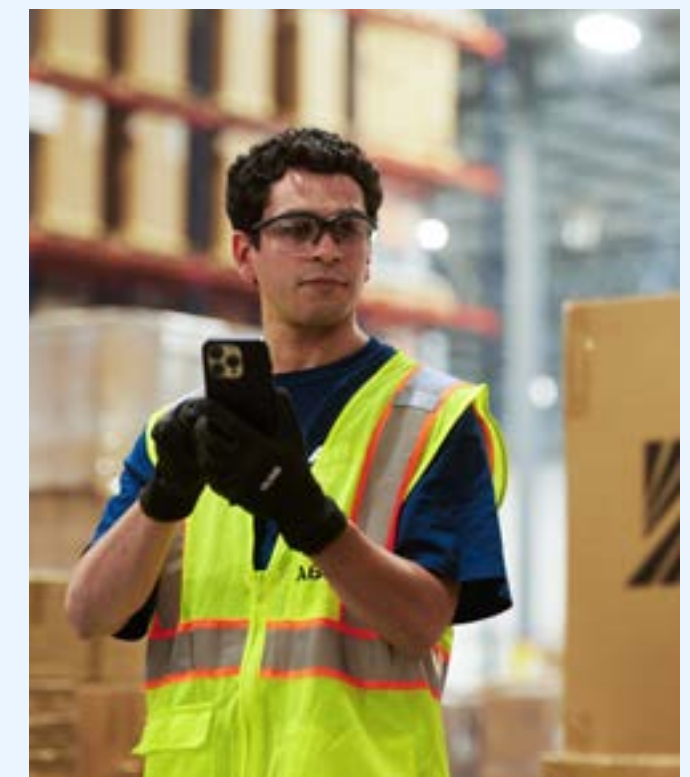
Tote maintenance: Ongoing cleaning and inventory management for automated workflows

Process coordination: A streamlined system to redistribute totes without interrupting production

Operational oversight: Coordination with leadership to ensure reliable service delivery

RESULTS

The facility regained its footing while reducing strain on internal staff. Totes are now fully integrated, allowing the automated system to function as designed. ABM's ongoing services ensure pallets and totes are managed without disrupting core operations. Today, ABM provides consistent staffing and standardized processes to ensure the production environment operates efficiently. The client also benefits from a more structured service model with clear communication channels and consistent management oversight.





Across life science facilities, commercial real estate, and highly regulated industries like food distribution, aerospace, and defense, Colorado facilities are focused on operating at higher levels with greater transparency, while managing costs.

ABM is helping area facility leaders anticipate what's next with strategies that deliver measurable outcomes—and keep pace with the changing dynamics of an undeniably robust market.

Talk to our Colorado team at **866.624.1520** or visit **[ABM.com/colorado](https://www.abm.com/colorado)**.



FACILITY
ENGINEERING &
INFRASTRUCTURE
SOLUTIONS

ABM drives possibility through facility, engineering, and infrastructure solutions across a wide range of industries. Our inclusive teams work together to advance a healthier, more sustainable, ever-changing world. Under our care, systems perform, businesses prosper, and occupants thrive. Every day, over 100,000 of us partner with our clients to care for the people, places, and spaces important to you. We are making spaces smarter, modernizing infrastructure, and transforming facilities to become more resilient.

Driving possibility, together.