

Laundry TODAY

TODAY'S NEWS FOR CHANGING TIMES

SAVING MONEY IN THE LAUNDRY ROOM

By: Bill Brooks, National Sales Manager, UniMac

Keeping costs low while continuing to provide premium services for customers is a daily struggle for any operations manager. With so many areas to oversee, it's easy to overlook one of the most important—the laundry room.

G-Force extraction speeds continue to increase. Certain manufacturers are producing washer-extractors that spin at up to 400 G-Force—removing more water from linens than lower G-Force machines.

If you ran a 60-pound, 100 G-Force machine 365 days a year, 12 loads a day and at \$1.00 per Therm, it would cost approximately \$4,630 in gas to dry the linen completely. Comparatively, assuming you used



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The laundry room is an essential behind the scenes operation, where there are a number of ways to save money and still provide customers with the quality linens they expect. Newer technologies, coupled with reliable, durable, industrial-strength machines can save owners thousands of dollars in the first year alone.

The initial investment in laundry equipment is the most important aspect of making sure a laundry room is cost efficient in the future. Choosing machine features such as high G-Force extraction, advanced controls and industry-leading technologies, combined with proper employee processes, allows managers to operate an efficient laundry room.

G-FORCE

The best place to remove water from linens is the washer. As laundry technology advances,

the same amount of linen and previously mentioned data, the cost to dry linen in a 60-pound tumbler after withstanding 400 G-Force extraction speeds is \$2,746 a year in gas costs. The difference is \$1,884 per year, per machine. As many on-premises laundries have multiple machines, this is a significant cost saving in just one year.

As you can see, investing in a machine that offers high G-Force extraction will pay for itself over time, and help laundries reduce water and utility costs.

CONTROL FEATURES

Over the last few years, manufacturers have begun to truly automate machines through the development of advanced controls. These controls typically offer additional features to help make machines more efficient and can amount to thousands of dollars in energy, maintenance and labor savings.

Advanced controls have the ability to monitor machine performance and provide reports that show error messages, and maintenance information and alerts. Additionally, the reports give managers a continuous log of maintenance history, which can be used to keep track of how the machine is being used.

Alerts provide managers with important maintenance information in order to make sure machines are running at maximum efficiency. This feature helps prevent unnecessary downtime, repair costs and disruptions in service. For example, after every 200 hours of machine use, managers are alerted that the main bearings need to be greased. This prevents unnecessary wear and tear and allows managers to focus on other aspects of their job rather than manually recording.

Another feature available allows for actual time and date stamping of the last 25 loads completed. With

this function, managers can see what time a cycle started and ended. If long periods of time pass between cycles, it could mean employees aren't working efficiently. Reports like this can be used as a training mechanism, showing managers where supervision needs to be focused or where more training is needed.

Labor and quality issues can also be combated by restricting the fast forwarding of cycles. Some owners have reported employees skipping certain cycles in order to expedite the laundry process, which allows the employee to leave earlier or do less work during their shift. When this feature is turned on, managers can rest assured that the linens are being cleaned to the standards they have set in the time frame specified.

Since labor costs are such a huge expense of the laundry operation, one other feature to look for in machine controls is a head start option, which allows machines to begin a cycle before employees report for the day. Employees can load the washing machine at the end of one day and the machine will automatically start and finish so employees can immediately move the linens to the dryer at the beginning of the next shift. This allows for one extra load to be processed per day.

OVER-DRY PREVENTION TECHNOLOGY

Along with advanced controls, other technologies are becoming readily available for on-premises laundries, such as over-dry prevention. This





technology tells the dryer to shut off when a load of linen has reached an optimal level of dryness. This reduces energy costs associated with over-drying and protects the integrity of linens, decreasing the need for replacement.

In a survey of commercial laundry distributors and laundry managers, 79 percent believe on-premises laundries over-dry by more than eight minutes per cycle. If these eight minutes were eliminated, annual savings could be as much as \$883 in utilities and nearly \$5,000 in labor. Also, the linens experience 31 percent less fiber loss when over-

drying is eliminated.

OPERATIONS SAVINGS

An easy way that managers can make sure they're running an efficient laundry operation is by properly training employees on how to load machines. A common issue among on-premises laundries is that employees don't load machines to their full capacities. Underloading machines wastes water and chemicals. Additionally, underloading requires employees to clean more loads of laundry, causing unnecessary wear to the machine and increases in labor expenses.

The most important decision an operations manager will make is the type of machine that is purchased for use. It's vital to invest properly upfront for high quality equipment since it will pay for itself in the long run. Make sure to invest in a machine that is built for on-premises use and not a refitted coin machine. True OPL machines are engineered to work harder for longer periods of time. Additionally, always look for machines that provide you with lowest cost of ownership, which can be found with OPL machines that have features such high G-Force extraction speeds, advanced controls and over-dry prevention technology. To understand the exact savings available, contact your local on-premises laundry distributor. They will be able to provide you with detailed information to help increase efficiency in your laundry room.

