

It may be easier than you think to follow green laundry practices — and it can save you money, too.

# Being Green

By Carolyn Camilleri

**T**hese days, environmental consciousness is more than a trend: it is a critical part of the hotel industry, influencing everything from budget and operations to staff pride and public image.

"Quality has always been a constant for hoteliers, but now more than ever, energy efficiency, sustainability, and utility conservation is extremely important," says Zack Davis of Coldstream Commercial Sales, the exclusive authorized Laundrylux — Wascomat and Electrolux — distributor for British Columbia and the Yukon.

Adopting greener OPL (on-premise laundry) practices is one way a hotel can demonstrate their commitment to the

environment, but there is more to it than just asking guests to reuse their towels. Fortunately, advances in technology and product development mean it is getting easier — much easier than it was a few years back.

"When Green Key Global was first created 17 years ago, environmental initiatives in hotels were few and far between," says Linda Hartwell, director of marketing communications and business development, Hotel Association of Canada and Green Key Global. "Today, it has become part of a hotel's daily operations and guests expect it. An increasing number of travellers see value in hotels working to reduce their environmental impact."

In some cases, environmental concerns go beyond public image.

"A major concern facing hoteliers today is water usage and conservation," says Davis. "The time to plan for water conservation is before an area is faced with a drought; look no further than to the State of California to see challenges that the hoteliers face."

But while guests expect to see green measures in hotels—and will judge based on the perceived degree of sincerity—they have other expectations that can make being green challenging.

Dan Goldman, OPL national sales manager for North America for Laundrylux, manufacturers of Electrolux and Wascomat, says that what matters most to the tired, travelling business person is a clean room with a well-dressed bed.

"Many of the national chains have invested in triple sheeting and higher thread count for the linen as well as duvet covers replacing the old bedspread. All of this means more laundry," says Goldman. "Ultra-high extraction speeds of up to 450 G-force were unheard of when I entered the laundry and cleaning business in 1979. In those days, the linen par was 3.5; today, it is



When it comes to laundry – going green can benefit both the hotel and the planet.

under two. More pounds to be processed plus higher thread count and cotton mean more work for an in-house laundry."

At the same time, Goldman offers a realistic perspective on the purpose of those upgrades.

"In-house laundry was never conceived

to be a profit centre; rather, it was created to help turn out a better package. Hotel Occupancy Rates, Average Daily Rate, and Revenue Per Available Room make up the performance matrix that defines a hotel," he says. "But what pushes them up is the overall package."

**EcoTex**  
The Cold Water Catalyst

**Starts Saving You Money the Minute You Turn it On**

REDUCE ENERGY COSTS WHILE INCREASING WASH QUALITY

**EcoTex - The Cold Water Catalyst**  
Energy efficient laundry technology that cuts costs while providing a cleaner product.

As soon as you install your EcoTex on-premise laundry system, the savings begin. The advanced laundry oxidation technology provides superior sanitation along with major utility cost reductions. Your linens come out cleaner, softer, and fresher, saving money on linen replacement while reaping huge savings on energy and water.

80% less than energy
70% total water
30% less waste
20% faster wash
31% less

EarthSafe  
EcoTex  
The Cold Water Catalyst

Demands for a free facility analysis:  
800-262-0203 | 805-549-9724  
sales@ecotexorene.com | www.ecotexorene.com

**Jani-King**  
The King of Clean™

Hospitality Services

**Cleaning for Guest Retention**

Partner with Jani-King's hospitality cleaning experts today to develop a customized cleaning program to fit your needs.

- Front of house cleaning services** focus your restaurant, lobby, front entrance and common areas sparkling.
- Back of house cleaning services** target hard-to-clean areas including kitchens, loading docks and laundry services.
- Deep cleaning services** target carpets, drapes and upholstered items and give them a new lease on life.

800.565.1873 | www.janiking.ca



So how do you meet guest expectations, protect and improve the overall package that fosters patron loyalty and repeat visits, and still follow green practices?

Sure, those little cards asking guests to reuse their towels are one way, but there are other ways, too.

"[Hoteliers] can also invest in energy-efficient laundry equipment, install water softeners that reduce water use for laundry, pick non-peak hours to complete their laundry, or reuse water from a previous rinse cycle for the first wash of the next cycle by installing temporary holding tanks," says Hartwell. "These are just some of the initiatives that can be implemented. Every initiative — small, medium, or large — assists in reducing a hotel's overall environmental impact."

How easy or difficult it is to adopt greener practices depends on the property, its size, location, and commitment level.

"But every hotel can do something in the way of sustainability. It's not only good for our environment, but it's often also good for the bottom line," says Hartwell.

The introduction of the term "sustainability" has broadened the way we think about environmental impact. Goldman says that green has evolved into "sustainability," which, when it comes to hotel laundry, means great savings on the biggest costs of running an OPL.

"By following sound practices, the lodging industry has made big investments to improve labour practices and energy and water consumption, as well as the life of the bed linen," says Goldman.

The greatest leap forward is the advancement of technology.

"Reducing water and energy consumption remains a key concern in the hospitality industry, for managers and guests alike," says Bill Brooks, UniMac's North American sales manager. "A key challenge OPL operations have historically faced, however, is the inability to measure the operation's efficiency.

Brooks, who has more than 25 years' experience helping OPL managers find solutions to increase efficiency and improve their bottom line, says this shortcoming leads to another challenge - the inability to know if the laundry room is using excessive resources and costing the hotel more than is necessary.

"Managers may know statistics, such as how many loads are processed per day, but it is very difficult to measure the intricate details that affect the cost to run the laundry, including how many pounds of total capacity



*Electrolux 5000 Generation washers and dryers reduce energy and water consumption as well as increase productivity.*

**WESTBROOK**  
MFG LTD  
1115 Sanford Street, Winnipeg, MB, R3E 3A1  
[www.westbrookmfg.ca](http://www.westbrookmfg.ca)  
**204-582-6668**

**Manitoba's Home for Industrial  
(OPL) & Commercial, Coin Operated  
Laundry Equipment**  
Sales, Service, Parts, Installation for  
Continental, Dexter, B&C Tech Washers  
Dryers, Ironers, Carts and Chemicals  
WBM Ozone Systems

Two industrial laundry machines are shown side-by-side. On the left is a Dexter industrial washer, and on the right is a Continental industrial washer. Both are white with grey accents and have large circular glass doors.

## PRODUCT SHOWCASE

*Here are some products that can help hoteliers go green with their laundry.*



### A Global View of Operations

**TotalVue™ Powered by UniLinc™ is UniMac's® newest cloud-based monitoring and reporting tool.**

TotalVue provides easy, web-based access to laundry data and graphical performance reports, which can be used to make adjustments that maximize productivity and minimize costs.



### High-tech Meets High Performance

Hotels can save thousands of dollars each year in utility, linen, and labour costs by upgrading to equipment with advanced technologies. UniMac machines unite industry-leading control systems and

high-performance features, such as high G-force extraction, customizable and eco-friendly cycles, spray rinsing technology, and over-dry prevention technology to help hotel laundries operate at the lowest cost of ownership.



### All-round Cost-saver

The benefits of Westbrook Ozone Systems include drastic reductions in hot water and the natural gas needed to heat the water, a reduction in the chemicals needed in the wash process, less time to process linen, and a whiter, softer finished product.

*The knowledge that each piece washed is truly disinfected means peace of mind for the laundry operator.*

are being utilized, water and energy usage, and productivity," says Brooks. "Furthermore, if key details are known, it is difficult to analyze the information and make improvements."

But that has all changed. Brooks says that these challenges have turned into opportunities thanks to tools and technologies that allow hoteliers to measure performance and set benchmarks and then make changes that increase efficiency and reduce utility, linen, and labour costs.

Systems are now available that collect machine performance and maintenance data not only at the machine level, but also for an entire facility or even across multiple locations.

"Data is compiled into easy-to-read performance dashboards that detail energy and water usage, cycle times, and machine service-history logs," says Brooks. "Hotel decision-makers should also look for machines that can track cost per pound — or how much each pound of laundry is costing their operation with all attributing factors included."

The ability to collect this information allows hoteliers to quantify staff productivity and utility usage, which Brooks says are two key contributors to the overall cost of running a laundry. From there, benchmarks can be established and adjustments made that can save thousands of dollars annually in utility, labour, and linen costs.

"Without a control system that compiles machine data into an instantly accessible report, tracking these intricate details about a laundry operation's efficiency would have to be done manually, which is very time intensive," says Brooks.

Improving laundry practices is easier if you are using equipment designed to reduce environmental impact. The areas of focus are clear.

"Energy and water efficiency is paramount to having greener laundry practices," says Daryl Pospisil of Alberta Laundry, Electrolux and Wascomat distributors. "Energy, chemical, and water savings go right to the bottom line of hoteliers."

Goldman says Electrolux has made a large commitment to sustainability.

"Electrolux professional laundry equipment uses the least amount of water and energy possible, helping to improve the bottom line," he says, adding that products are designed to have the lowest possible manufacturing impact to the environment. Even the machines are over 95 per cent recyclable.

"This investment in manufacturing allows for a high-tech, lighter-weight, industrial design to save money all the way to the laundry," says Goldman. "Lower transportation costs and easier installation reduces your price. These same items allow for lower fossil fuel consumption."

By way of example, Goldman names the Electrolux 5000 Generation washers and dryers, which have features such as Automatic Water Savings, Auto Stop, Super Balance, and Residual Moisture Control that reduce energy and water consumption and increase productivity.

UniMac's OPTispray Rinsing Technology is another example of water-saving technology. It's a unique spray-rinsing feature that uses as much as 39 per cent less water and leaves up to 22 per cent less residual chemicals compared to bath rinses alone, says Brooks, explaining that the technology pulls chemicals through the load and down the drain. It also decreases cycle rinse time by 12 per cent, to increase throughput and lower water consumption.

Load weight plays a critical role. Davis says washers that weigh laundry and automatically adjust water levels based on poundage greatly aid in improving efficiency. Automatic weighing features are best-sellers, especially teamed up with a Smart Dosing unit for chemicals, he says.

"Under-loading occurs 70 per cent of the time, especially when the operator does not weigh the loads prior to processing," says Davis. "This is expensive and harmful to our environment but it also contributes to the high cost of linen replacement."

Brooks points out that customizable, eco-friendly cycles help achieve optimal efficiency. For example, UniMac's high-performance UW washer-extractors feature 41 customizable wash cycles, including nine ECO Cycles, which help conserve water and reduce energy.



## PRODUCT SHOWCASE



### Delivers on Investment

EcoTex Technology has been vetted by the U.S. Department of Energy for ROI, Energy and Water Savings, and Customer Satisfaction for Commercial Use in the Hospitality and Healthcare Industries. Linens come out cleaner, fresher smelling with superior disinfection using shorter cycle times and cooler temperatures, which means less wear and tear on fabrics.

### The Science of Clean

Haddon's Aquawing Ozone Laundry Systems uses an oxygen concentrator that converts air to 95 per cent oxygen. The ozone generator separates O<sub>2</sub> atoms from the oxygen concentrator, then reassembles them into groups of three: that's ozone. A patented injector sends the ozone through the linen where it attacks bacteria and soil and delivers a high-quality result. And it does all this in cool water.



### Taking the Guesswork Out

Electrolux washers automatically weigh each load and adjust the water levels based on poundage - not just volume - reducing water by up to 30 per cent. Smart Dosing automatically adds chemical to match

### Taking the Guesswork Out

Electrolux washers automatically weigh each load and adjust the water levels based on poundage - not just volume - reducing water by up to 30 per cent. Smart Dosing automatically adds chemical to match



the load size and Super Balance provides the correct extraction and increases the life of the washers. Electrolux has been named a "sector leader" three years in a row by the Dow Jones Sustainability Index.

### Making Timed Drying Passé



Electrolux T5550 Dryers have Residual Moisture Control, which allows precise measurement of remaining moisture. Axial Heating can save up to 25 per cent in energy costs and reversing reduces gas consumption and cuts down on wrinkles. Auto stop and RMC put an end to timed drying and eliminate costly, linen-destroying over-drying.

Less soap is also good thing, but it has to be reduced properly.

Charles Reid, general manager of Haddon Equipment and Supplies, which supplies UniMac, Huebsch, and Continental equipment, as well as chemicals, says hotels often miss out on energy saving opportunities.

"What happens is a lot of people just sell a piece of equipment, drop it in there, and then there's a chemical company that comes in and does things to it but they don't really know how to program them properly so they don't get full advantages of the equipment," says Reid.

"It's really important for hotels to be able to work with their equipment supplier and their chemical supplier to make sure that they are really getting the best of everything," says Reid. "We see a lot of stuff that could be greener but it doesn't get taken advantage of because of those reasons."

Sometimes just changing chemicals makes a difference.

"We have a very green detergent right now. It is totally environmentally friendly. It reduces hot water and total water usage actually," says Reid, explaining that when hot water is reduced so is the energy needed to heat it. "Even the containers are recyclable."

Another big change has been the introduction of ozone technology. Unlike chlorine bleach, ozone is environmentally friendly because it isn't a chemical. Most ozone disappears and the rest returns to breathable oxygen in 20 minutes or less. Plus, it is a great linen-friendly disinfectant that kills 99.999 per cent of all super bugs on every wash.

"We do it more on the healthcare side right now, but ozone is a system that is installed on existing laundry equipment that reduces hot water usage by 75 to 80 per cent," says Reid. "It also helps to reduce the amount of chemicals that are required — not a lot but a little — but the less chemicals we put down the drain, the greener the laundry."

Juli Watt, marketing communications at ClearWater Tech, says ozone technology is one of the most efficient energy-saving technologies available today.

"The EcoTex Advanced Ozone Laundry System enables commercial laundry professionals to replace expensive multi-step wash programs that use excessive hot water, with a cold-water program that provides great disinfection in addition to all of the attributes a hotelier should be looking for to increase sustainability of their facility,"

gives available today.

"The EcoTex Advanced Ozone Laundry System enables commercial laundry professionals to replace expensive multi-step wash programs that use excessive hot water, with a cold-water program that provides great disinfection in addition to all of the attributes a hotelier should be looking for to increase sustainability of their facility."

EcoTex uses a cold-water diffusion technology to maximize laundering effectiveness for bacteria kill and soil removal, extend fabric life and protection, and provide a rapid return-on-investment, all with less environmental impact, says Watt.

Chris Marquart of Westbrook Manufacturing, which supplies products by Continental, Dexter, and B&C Technologies, Jan/San chemical products with the Ecologo or Greenleaf logo, and the Westbrook Ozone System, also says ozone systems use up to 85 per cent less hot water and 10 to 12 per cent less chemicals.

"The bottom line or the hotel's 'green' is the most important factor when making decisions about green products and practices," he says. "If a product can be replaced by a green product that performs as well while maintaining their current cost structure, it should be replaced. Determining true ROI on green systems is important before implementation."

While maximizing water efficiency is critical, getting the water out of linens is more so in terms of energy costs.

"Using a washer-extractor with a high G-force extraction rate is the single most effective way to reduce drying times and gas usage, allowing OPL facilities to save on utilities," says Brooks.

How much can it help?

Marquart says high G-force extraction washers can reduce drying time and natural gas usage by as much as 50 per cent compared to older hard-mount, low G-force extraction washers.

Reid says high-extract washers are an example of where "dollars and cents get in the way of making a good decision."



Because high-extract machines cost substantially more than "regular" machines, Reid says it is not that easy to convince people of the benefits, especially if existing machines are still working.

"They don't understand that the payback in the high-extract machine will offset the cost of the machine," says Reid.

The payback comes from less drying time. Brooks says tumble dryers account for 70 per cent of utility expenses. The worst thing you can do? Over-dry.

According to a UniMac study, over-drying by just eight minutes per load on a 75-pound tumble dryer can cost a facility an extra \$883 in utilities and \$4,866 in labour annually.

That alone justifies ensuring your equipment has features designed to shut off when the load is dry — for example UniMac's OPTidry Over-dry Prevention Technology and Electrolux's Residual Moisture Control.

The key is an automatic shut-off when the load is dry rather than waiting for the time chosen to run out, says Pospisil. And, as Marquart points out, dryers with true humidistat control not only eliminate over-drying and wasted energy, but also drastically reduce static.

But there is another reason to want less drying time: the heat is punishing to linens. Brook says technology that accurately prevents over-drying can result in 31 per cent less fibre loss compared to machines without the technology.

"With linen replacement representing between 13 and 25 per cent of a laundry's overall budget, the potential savings to be had by using over-dry prevention technology are significant," says Brooks.

All in all, these advanced technologies can save thousands of dollars in utility costs and hundreds of gallons of water, says Brooks.

"By utilizing the most advanced equipment and tools available, hotels ensure optimal care of linens, heightened guest satisfaction, and minimized operating costs while reducing potential negative environmental impact," says Brooks.

Goldman, too, agrees that these investments have improved profitability, and suggests there is another aspect to consider. "It is the social responsibility for each of us to leave less impact on the earth," says Goldman.

And at the end of the day, knowing that the decisions you make benefit hotel operation and the planet is something you can feel good about.



*Alberta Laundry knows that energy and water efficiency is paramount for hoteliers, as the savings go right to their bottom line.*

**Enjoy Hassle Free Laundry with Total Care**

-  Equipment and service for one monthly fee
-  Guaranteed nation-wide service with priority response
-  EcoTex® Ozone system can save 85% of your hot water use, and 35% total water consumption

**Coinamatic®**  
Laundry & Beyond, Simply Clean.

Receive a FREE survey of your laundry services, call: 1.877.755.5302  
email: info@coinamatic.com  
www.coinamatic.com

Exclusive national distributor of IPSO & EcoTex ozone equipment.

