



YMCA Boosts Laundry Production with E-Series Washer

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*Athletic
Laundry Profile*

Thanks to a new high-speed, 40-pound capacity Continental E-Series Washer-Extractor, the Oshkosh YMCA, in Oshkosh, Wis., significantly improved laundry productivity, cut utility consumption and slashed dry time. Now, YMCA attendants easily keep pace with the laundry demands of 14,000 members and 52,000 different users — delivering a fast, efficient and consistent clean every time.

The facility replaced an ailing 25-pound capacity washer with the bigger, 40-pound capacity E-Series Washer in order to increase cycle production, improve energy efficiency and cut several minutes of dry time per load. “With the old washer, we were constantly falling behind in the laundry room,” says Lynne Hopkins, YMCA housekeeping manager. The new machine, she maintains, features a soft-mount design that simplifies installation and doesn’t require a special concrete foundation; energy-efficient engineering designed to use less water per load; and high-speed extract to shorten dry time and resulting gas consumption.

High Extract Speeds Reduce Dry Time

The YMCA cleans 1,000 pounds of towels and personal items

per day, according to Dave Ihrig, property manager. The high extract speeds of E-Series have played an important role in decreasing the amount of time it takes to get the laundry dry, back on the shelf and ready for member use.

“Besides just providing for our members and users, the YMCA also runs numerous special events, such as high school swim meets. All of that laundry really adds up,” adds Jeff Schneider, vice president of operations. “We used to always be behind. Now we are not running out of towels for our customers — even during peak season.”

“E-Series can reach up to 354 G-force extract speeds, which can cut dry time by up to 40 percent,” says Fritz Baenen, owner of OPL Services, a laundry distributorship in Green Bay, Wis. Thanks to E-Series’ extract speeds, more water is removed from each load, and as a result, less time is required in the dryer. Whenever dry time is reduced, according to Baenen, linens experience less wear and tear, dryers consume less gas and last longer, and attendants complete laundry sooner.

“After the installation of our E-Series Washer, we have increased dryer capacity by 30 percent without even switching our dryers,” says Hopkins.

Moreover, Baenen points out that E-Series Washers use less water than most similarly sized washers, resulting in less water heated and additional savings in gas and electricity. Energy-efficiency is important for organizations like the YMCA. “We

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use less gas because we run our dryers 30 percent less often,” says Schneider. That’s significant, he maintains, since the new E-Series handles a considerably larger volume of laundry than the machine it replaced — about 15 pounds more per load.

Soft-mount Design Integral Part of Easy Installation

But, part of the reason the YMCA selected the E-Series was for its freestanding design. A hard-mount washer would not suffice for the YMCA’s compact laundry room. “The design of our laundry facility prevents the installation of a hard-mount machine,” says Hopkins. The soft-mount, freestanding design of E-Series can be very beneficial both in making the most of any on-premise facility’s floor space and sheer ease of installation, according to Baenen. “Hard-mount washers must be bolted to a thick, reinforced concrete foundation, but E-Series’ freestanding design allows for it to be installed on most any surface with little or no down time, floor prep or cost,” he says.

Programmability Enhances Wash Quality and Ease of Use

Even though the YMCA’s daily laundry is composed of mostly towels, there are other items the facility washes as well. According to Hopkins, the loads may also include café rags, cleaning rags, mop heads, shower curtains and customers’ personal belongings. By having different programs, E-Series properly cleans each item. “We have a program with a power back detergent booster, which is helpful for heavily soiled café rags,” says Hopkins.

The quality of wash is definitely important to YMCA customers, which proved to be a problem with the machine the YMCA replaced. “The chemical feeder in the other machine did not work properly. With the automatic chemical injection in E-Series, you don’t need to worry about adding detergents, softeners and bleach yourself. You just push start,” says Hopkins.

E-Series’ automatic chemical injection dispenses the correct amount of chemicals in the wash load to ensure that every load is clean and chemicals are not overused, she maintains. “Before we got our E-Series, we were having problems with the laundry coming out of the washer still having hand prints, rust or stains

on it. Now that we’ve replaced the old washer, we aren’t seeing that anymore,” says Hopkins.

“Our customers expect to have laundry that is clean for both sanitary and appearance purposes,” adds Schneider. “Having white towels means you can definitely see when they’re not clean.”

The programmability of E-Series is key to washing consistency and ease of use when a number of different people are running the machine — a scenario familiar to the YMCA. “Our entire housekeeping crew does laundry, and different workers use the machines throughout the day,” says Hopkins. Because E-Series is pre-programmed, the user simply selects a program number and presses start. “This is especially helpful for our night shift, which always has back-breaking work,” adds Hopkins. “Because the machine is already programmed, our workers don’t even have to fuss with it.”

A Wise Choice for a Growing Facility

Business at the YMCA has grown beyond anticipation in the time since it was constructed five years ago. “When the facility was first built, we assumed we had enough space, but we have already outgrown it,” Schneider says. “We have already made plans for the construction of additions, including building a new field house, expanding the lifestyle center and doubling the size of the aerobics studio.”

Of course, growth in customers means growth in laundry loads, as well. “After seeing the benefits of the E-Series purchase, we plan on fitting it in the budget to buy another one,” maintains Schneider.

Hopkins agrees. At first, she was less enthusiastic about replacing the old washer with the E-Series. “I am not one for change, and at the time, I thought the old machine worked fine. Why change it?” she says. Since seeing the positive impact E-Series has had on ease of use and laundry productivity, Hopkins’ opinion reversed. “I went from not wanting the E-Series at all to loving it,” she says. “Now I wonder how I ever got along without it!”