

KANSAS HOSPITAL CUTS \$350,000 A YEAR WITH IN-HOUSE LAUNDRY



APRIL 2017 • By Haley Jorgensen

After outsourcing hospital laundry since 1950, Clara Barton Hospital, in Hoisington, Kan., brought laundry processing in house for a \$350,000 drop in annual costs. "I knew we were getting gouged, but I had no idea by how much," said Clara Barton Hospital CEO Jim Blackwell. "The results were beyond my wildest dreams."



Brian Asher (left) assisted Clara Barton Hospital CEO Jim Blackwell (right) with the new on-premise Continental laundry.

Blackwell, who was frustrated by the linen service's cost and quality, studied the laundry process for several years before diving in. "We just didn't have any square footage internally to take it in house without adding bricks and mortar," he said. In 2013, that changed. Clara Barton Hospital added a new physical therapy wing, and with the expanded square footage, added an on-premise laundry. Blackwell worked in concert on the project with the hospital's architect and Brian Asher, of Commercial Laundry Sales & Service (CLS&S), in Wichita, Kan.

"The hospital had been paying a linen company in the neighborhood of \$3 per pound," said Asher. "We forecasted that by bringing the laundry in house, their cost of doing laundry would drop to 55 cents per pound, which included the cost of

labor, utilities, equipment, financing, linen replacement and chemicals."

It was a no-brainer. Asher installed high-performance Continental soft-mount washers and dryers to ensure low utilities, maximized throughput, advanced programmability and ease-of-use. One laundry operator uses the Continental laundry equipment to process 11,000 pounds of laundry per month.

Soft-Mount Washers for Simple Installation and High Performance

The soft-mount E-Series Washers (one 55-, one 30-, and one 20-pound capacity models) are freestanding, feature a flexible control, and generate high-extract speeds up to 387 G-force. Three Continental Pro-Series II Dryers (two 35- and one 55-pound capacity models) round out the equipment mix. "We

could have poured a thicker concrete pad to accommodate hard-mount washers, but it made sense to go with the soft-mount washers for ease of installation; higher G-force extract speeds; and maximized productivity, efficiency and labor savings," said Asher.

Soft-mount washers remove considerably more moisture from laundry during extract, when compared to most hard-mount washers on the market, so laundry dries in significantly less time. "This boosts laundry throughput while reducing natural gas consumption and resulting costs," he said.

Designing the Laundry for Quality, Sanitation & Ease-of-Use

When developing the on-premise laundry, adhering to state and federal health standards was paramount. "We ensured there was no



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Soft-mount E-Series Washers and Pro-Series II Dryers save the hospital \$350,000 annually.

cross contamination,” said Blackwell. “Soiled laundry coming in is completely separate from clean laundry going out.” Other requirements include a 25-minute bath time at 165 degrees Fahrenheit. “An optional temperature boost on the washers allows them to reach state and federal sanitation standards,” added Asher. “Because of the 25-minute bath time, wash cycles are close to 50 minutes.” Thanks to high-speed extract and soft-mount E-Series Washers, laundry loads dry quickly.

Highly Programmable Control

The 55- and 30-pound washers also feature the flexible Inteli control, which allows complete control over every conditional aspect of the wash process, including water temperature by degree, wash rotation speed and duration, water levels, bath cool-down by degree and extract speeds. Chemicals are automatically injected into the wash cycle, at the right time and water temperature, according to the program selected. Asher, who also provides the hospital with cleaning chemicals, set up individual wash programs for items like blankets, gowns, sheets, towels, bed pads,

scrubs and rags. “It’s really easy,” added Blackwell. “Our laundry operator just enters a program number and presses start.”

Dryers with Moisture Sensing Reduce Fabric Damage

Once washed, items are quickly dried in highly programmable Pro-Series II Dryers. The dryers are engineered with a moisture sensing system that ensures items are not over-dried, according to Blackwell. Linen Life Extension (LLE) offers 12 programmable dryness levels and targets any dryness level from zero to 40 percent. When the load has reached its preset target level of dryness, the control shuts the dryer off. Thanks to this moisture sensing system, dry goods experience less damage and fiber loss, according to Asher. “LLE effectively reduces over drying, resulting fabric damage, and cuts energy and labor costs,” he said. “This contributes to high-quality results.”

Control, Quality and the Bottom Line

Clara Barton Hospital now enjoys complete control over laundry quality, inventory and

production. “Before we moved laundry in house, we were getting linens back tattered and stained,” said Blackwell. Now, anything subpar is pulled and replaced with new inventory. “We feel like our wash cycles and attention to detail fit hand-in-hand really well.”

The icing on the cake? Clara Barton Hospital is on track to save \$1.75 million over five years. “The cost savings is impressive, but I’m equally ecstatic about the quality of the product and inventory we have on hand,” said Blackwell. “Continental laundry products are phenomenal. I can’t imagine why any facility would outsource its laundry.”

To find out more about Continental laundry equipment, call 800-256-1073 or visit www.cgilaundry.com. To discover more about CLS&S or Clara Barton Hospital, visit www.clsands.com or www.clarabartonhospital.com, respectively.



Clara Barton Hospital is a 25-bed critical access hospital in rural, central Kansas. Established in 1950, the hospital offers acute care, general surgery, orthopedics and physical therapy services. Serving a sprawling rural area, it offers a number of satellite healthcare and surgery clinics.