

# 60-MINUTE WASH/DRY & FOLD SETS NEW EXPRESS LAUNDRY CENTER APART



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An extensive renovation and the installation of freestanding equipment morphed an old bank building into a high-speed laundry. Located in the Clark Fulton neighborhood of Cleveland, the new 3,500-square-foot Express Laundry Center delivers what other area laundries can't—a 60-minute wash/dry/fold, convenient card access and pleasing customer care.

Retired schoolteacher Joe Olivo purchased the Federal Bank Building at the tail end of his teaching career. "Over the next few months I did research on laundries," he said. "I accessed Continental Girbau online to contact my regional representative, Scott Vlahos. I called Scott in Akron and asked if his father was Andy Vlahos. It turns out, our fathers had been good friends."

## Transforming Bank to Laundry

During the next few months, Vlahos, of Advantage Equipment, assisted Olivo with the bank's renovation and redesign. "The main bank building was re-roofed and tuck-pointed," said Olivo. "The adjacent addition was virtually knocked down, except part of the floor and one wall, and reconstructed." The laundry took form around an old vault, which became the office, and 18-inch walls. "The reconstruction took awhile," said Olivo. "Someone broke in and pulled the copper plumbing off the walls. We put new windows in the second floor so we could rent out the



upstairs apartments. Scott helped a lot with the layout and equipment mix."

In November 2013, the fully attended Express Laundry Center held its grand opening. Located in a low-income and

ethnically diverse area, the laundry caters to young and old alike. "The people are nice and I like this neighborhood," said Olivo.

Clean and bright, the Express Laundry Center offers a 60-minute wash/dry; robust mix of ExpressWash™ Washer-Extractors, including 14 20s, 11 30s and 10 40s; 14 Continental dual-pocket stack ExpressDry™ Dryers; Card Concepts Inc. FasCard™ system; vending and

snack machines; as well as wash/dry/fold service. Since opening, it's grown to serve more than 2,500 customers.

## Freestanding Washers Critical for Over-basement Laundry

Key to the laundry's success is its equipment, according to Olivo. The freestanding ExpressWash Washers ensure a 60-minute wash/dry/fold; simple installation; lower utility costs; improved customer turnover and boosted profit potential.

"The soft-mount washers are installed in the main bank building, which sits over a basement," said Olivo. "We couldn't put hard-mount washers in because they require a reinforced concrete foundation, which we didn't have. We had to go with soft-mount machines or we simply could not have developed the laundry."



2500 State Road 44 • Oshkosh, WI 54904  
920-231-8222 • Fax 920-231-4666  
800-256-1073 • www.continentalgirbau.com





Continental laundry equipment. It's simple to tweak programs for additional energy or water savings, as well as for marketing purposes. The computer interface allows Olivo to program machines through the card system and view washer operation statistics remotely from a computer, tablet or cell phone, via the Internet. He can also go into the exchanger remotely and issue cards, check what machines are doing, or find out how much money was generated that day. The remote store-management system allows him to see what's going on and respond quickly if there is a problem. A great marketing tool, Olivo uses the card system to launch loyalty and bonus programs, and schedule time-of-day pricing.

"We offer three, four and five free dries on the 20-, 30- and 40-pound capacity washers," he said. Customers also get a \$3 credit after \$30 of washes."

*Fully attended, clean and bright, the Express Laundry Center is open from 7 a.m.-11 p.m. Monday through Sunday. For more information about the Express Laundry Center, call 216-651-0665. To discover more about Continental laundry products, visit [www.continentalgirbau.com](http://www.continentalgirbau.com), or call 800-256-1073*

### In and Out in 60 Minutes!

He's glad he did. The washers also produce greater extract speeds (up to 354 G-force) when compared with comparable hard-mount washers (75-200 G-force). In doing so, according to Vlahos, Express-Wash Washers remove more water during extract, which decreases resulting dry time by up to 50 percent. "The benefits are remarkable," according to Vlahos. "High-speed extract improves customer turnover – getting customers in and out in under an hour – which works to boost profit potential." And, by promising a 60-minute wash/dry, the Express Laundry Center sets itself apart from the competition—drawing and retaining customers.

### High-speed Extract Lowers Utility Costs

Reduced dry time translates into reduced dryer operation and natural gas usage, as well. So while utility costs at the average coin laundry make up 26 percent of gross revenue, according to a recent Coin Laundry Industry Survey, utilities at the Express Laundry Center make up just 15 percent, according to Olivo.

It's a win-win.

### Card Operated and Managed

Adding to customer convenience is the store's Card Concepts Inc. FasCard™ system, which accepts credit and debit cards and interfaces seamlessly with

