



The numbers add up

Southern Oregon Linen Service adjusts for today's world by choosing energy efficient LAVATEC equipment

LAVATEC
Laundry Technology Inc.



A laundry cake travels from the tunnel washer to its next destination, one of the six new TT-745 gas dryers installed last month.

Marathon runners train their bodies relentlessly, running hundreds of miles to prepare themselves for a race. They do it to build endurance so they can overcome any conditions, stave off fatigue and finish with a strong sprint to the finish line.

That scenario is similar to the situation where LAVATEC recently installed new equipment at Southern Oregon Linen Service (SOLS). Four years after beginning the process, LAVATEC had only 10 days to remove the old machinery and install an entire new system that centered around a custom-built continuous tunnel washer. They completed it in eight, and SOLS is on the road to achieving their energy efficiency goals.

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The shuttle system feeds the new LAVATEC tunnel, which is helping Southern Oregon Linen Service reduce their water usage by an average of 30,000 gallons a day.

Equipment to meet today's changing demands

His statement is significant and relevant to the challenges SOLS has encountered. Four years is hardly a normal process but climate change has caused a shift away from what is considered normal in the western United States. The company took stock in the needs of their customers, where the industry is heading, and regional business and environmental conditions before making their decision after thorough consideration.

Water and energy conservation have taken on a new meaning and here's why. SOLS is in White City, about 35 miles north of the California border and close to I-5, the major north-south interstate that runs through the states bordering the Pacific Ocean.

A provider of cooperative laundry services for nine Oregon hospitals and one assisted living facility within a 300-mile radius, their 30,000 square-foot facility first opened for business in 1996. With 70 full-time employees, it makes them one of the largest local employers in the town of less than 10,000 people.



A few weeks before the LAVATEC equipment arrived at SOLS, the Governor of Oregon declared a drought emergency in several counties including Jackson, where White City is located. Over 70% of the county is experiencing extreme conditions, and forecasters are predicting the prolonged drought to be worse than the last two years. Local farmers delayed planting due to the lower water storage and snowpack levels, and there are huge concerns again since the fire season officially arrived on June 1.



Key members of the Southern Oregon Linen Service team include, from left to right: plant production manager Todd Nelson; engineer Allen Longon; lead engineer Heith Kafer; plant lead Juan Quintero; customer service manager Catalina Uribe; human resources manager Monica Verduzco; board treasurer Cara Marsh-Rhodes; board president Todd Shields; general manager Antonio Casillas; plant supervisor Cecilia Barajas; and business operations manager Shelley Loar.

Jim Slatcher, LAVATEC’s western regional sales manager, began conversations and building a solid relationship with the Southern Oregon Linen Service management team in 2018. When it became apparent last year that it was time to replace their existing tunnel system, LAVATEC was one of three vendors invited to submit proposals.

“We never had any LAVATEC equipment, but after four years of working with them and understanding the benefits of their system, it was evident they were our choice,” said Casillas. “LAVATEC is now part of the Southern Oregon Linen Services family, and we look forward to future projects with them.”

In addition to the new LT60 continuous tunnel washing system with 14 compartments, SOLS added an LP572 40-bar press, six TT-745 dryers with a capacity of 292 pounds each, and a Shuttle system. To keep up with the demands of a two-shift, five-days-a-week work schedule, Casillas outsourced work to several area laundries until the conversion was completed.

“LAVATEC did a phenomenal job completing the project in eight days. I would like to genuinely thank everyone involved with the installation team for all the support, especially Pacific Machinery Moving,” said Casillas, referring to the California company Slatcher brought in to handle the rigging for the project. “In my opinion, Hector Gutierrez has put together the best rigging company in the industry.”



Certifiably, Casillas and his staff know they are working with the best energy efficient washing equipment in the industry.

The simplicity of the LT-60 tunnel washer gets the ball rolling, delivering superior performance with maximum throughput. With the capability of over 100 wash programs, it allows them to select, monitor and control all inputs and levels of energy, water and chemicals to do the work. Its power source is the tunnel rotation, which utilizes four motor-powered friction drives. That delivers a huge advantage compared to a single-motor chain drive requiring constant lubrication.



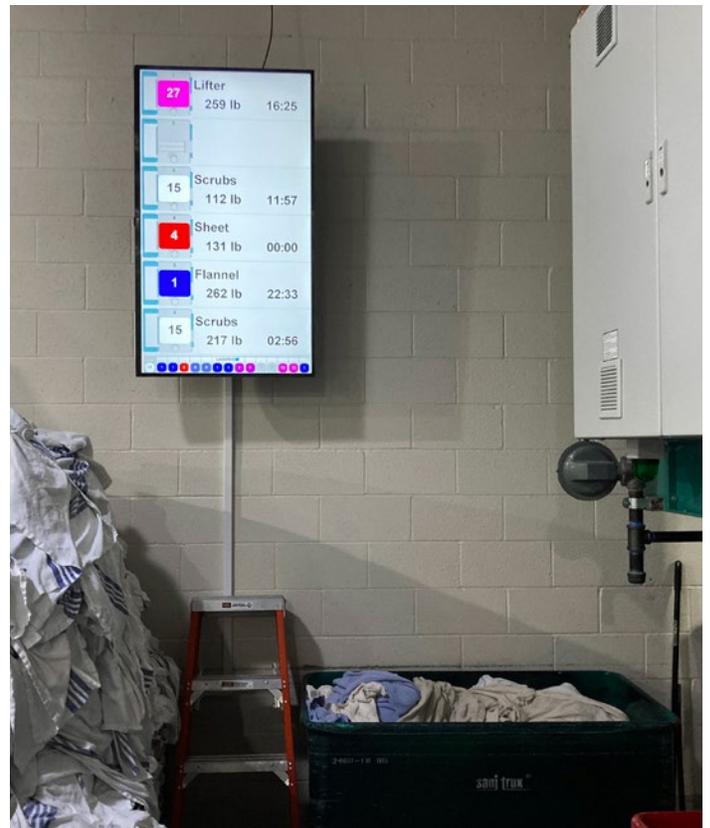
Casillas is also impressed with the TT-745 dryers. Equipped with an in-line burner, these machines provide total basket coverage that evenly distributes heat throughout the drum. A more efficient fuel burn is achieved with the lower gas pressure and BTU consumption, generating additional time and cost savings.

“The equipment has definitely lived up to our expectations. After the installation we had a few minor issues as expected, and the LAVATEC team promptly took care of it,” remarked Casillas.

“Having six dryers has kept our steam line flowing consistently. The infrared sensors work very efficiently and help keep the flow of work moving quickly. When you combine the extraction press and shuttle, the whole system has helped us to run more efficiently.”

Casillas indicated another important factor with the new equipment is it’s designed to take Southern Oregon Linen Service to the next level.

“We have been producing over 8 million pounds of linen consistently,” he said. “We expect to see growth in our business and process about 9 million pounds in 2023. As we continue to expand, we hope to add additional equipment.”



About Lavatec Laundry Technology, Inc.

Delivering dependable commercial laundry equipment engineered for higher returns throughout their lifecycles has always been the Lavatec Laundry Technology (LLT) mission statement. A rarity among manufacturers of continuous tunnel washers, Lavatec LT offers center transfer, bottom transfer and double-drum construction options, plus a full range of readily integrated, end-to-end laundry system components: washer extractors, extraction presses, centrifuges, dryers, conveyor systems, pickers, feeders, ironers and folders. Simple design, durable construction, user-friendly operation and low maintenance are hallmarks of Lavatec LT machines. A global leader with equipment in laundry operations throughout Europe, the Far East, South and North America, in the United States alone, over 6,000 Load Warriors are in place. For additional information, visit www.LLTusa.com.

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