

Vet Clinic Cleans Up *Laundry Act*

By Liz Molitor

“Laundry was a constant concern for our clinic; the contaminated towels from surgery piled up, and we were always behind,” says Jenna Resch, vet assistant at The Great Lakes Veterinary Clinic (Great Lakes) in Neenah, Wis. By replacing the clinic’s homestyle top-load washer with a freestanding, highly efficient Continental E-Series Washer-Extractor and matching dryer, the vet clinic has significantly improved laundry production using less water and energy.

“The new washer and dryer has cut our time spent doing laundry by more than 20 hours per week and saved the clinic hundreds of dollars in utility and water bills,” says Dr. Randy Van Maanen, veterinarian at Great Lakes.

Choosing the Right Laundry Equipment

Before the installation of its new Continental E-Series Washer and Dryer, Great Lakes relied on a homestyle top-load washer and dryer. But the machines couldn’t withstand constant use. The motors on both the washer and dryer burnt out on a yearly basis, according to Van Maanen. The top-load washers also guzzled 40 gallons of water per load, provided poor wash quality and failed to keep pace with mounting laundry. “We knew we needed something stronger,” says Van Maanen. After exploring



Jenna Resch, vet assistant at Great Lakes attends to one of the patients at the clinic.

the options for industrial-grade laundry equipment, Van Maanen installed a Continental 20-pound capacity E-Series Washer-Extractor and matching dryer. The ENERGY STAR-qualified E-Series Washer is complete with high-speed extract, unmatched programmability and an easy-to-install soft-mount design. The E-Series Dryer is equipped with stainless steel panels for industrial grade durability and special features for simplified serviceability. The dryer also utilizes its large cylinder and axial airflow to boost efficiency.

Soiled Linens Harbor Biohazards

Before the new equipment, mountains of laundry piled up in the clinic, distracting office staff from the jobs they were hired

to perform. “We couldn’t hire a laundry attendant, so our veterinary assistant did all of the laundry,” says Van Maanen. “But this distracted her from doing her actual job—assisting the veterinarian.”

Jenna Resch, veterinarian assistant, agrees. “The soiled laundry sat in the supply room for days and began to smell—it was very unsanitary and a prime area for bacteria to grow,” she says. “And every 45 minutes I was running out of surgery to make sure the laundry was being changed. The night and weekend employees had to also do laundry just so the clinic could keep up. The dryer took much longer to dry, sometimes having to run two cycles. Wet towels were piled everywhere waiting to go into the dryer,” she maintains.



Vet Assistant Jenna Resch stands next to the clinic’s new E-Series Washer.

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Dr. Randy Van Maanen, veterinarian, in his office at Great Lakes Vet Clinic.

Clean Laundry is Crucial to Curbing Disease

The clinic generates 500 pounds of laundry per week in soiled towels, mop heads and blankets. Similar to a human hospital, the clinic works hard to ensure disease doesn't spread from patient to patient. That's why it is crucial to promptly clean and sterilize soiled laundry, according to Van Maanen and Resch.

"The towels coming from surgery and the blankets used for bedding, are typically heavily soiled, often covered in blood, urine, feces or vomit," says Resch.

The animals face infection if the laundry is not cleaned properly. Towels and bedding can harbor intestinal viruses and parasite eggs. "Parvovirus, for example, is extremely contagious and can be fatal for our animals. It can be easily spread through human hands, food dishes, contact and bedding," says Van Maanen. "Parvovirus is also very resilient; bleach is the only way to kill the virus. That's why maintaining an efficient and effective laundry process is so important."

Programmability Delivers a Better Clean

The E-Series Washer's programmable control ensures each load is properly cleaned and decontaminated. The washer-extractor features the Logi Control, which offers eight individually modifiable programs—each with up to nine baths including multiple pre-wash, wash and rinse cycles. Variables within each bath can also be individually programmed for maximum efficiency given the load type,

including wash temperature, water levels, cycle times, rotation and G-force extract speeds. For the heavily soiled laundry, Resch relies on the first and second settings—the most intense wash cycle with a presoak option.

"Before we soaked all of the bloody towels in the sink for a few hours. Now everything can be done right in the washer," says Resch. "We also inject bleach and specially designed soap at exact times in the cycles to fight biohazardous material—guaranteeing a consistent clean with every wash."

ENERGY STAR and Utility Savings

As an ENERGY STAR-qualified washer-extractor, E-Series consumes far less energy, gas and water than homestyle machines. The washer's freestanding design also contributes to ease of installation and high-speed extract.

Fritz Baenen owns OPL Services in Green Bay, Wis., a laundry equipment distributor serving much of Wisconsin. He maintains laundry dries faster due to E-Series' high-speed extract and programmable settings. The E-Series Washer reaches extraction speeds of up to 300 G-force, about 200 G-force more than most top-load washers. The super-speed extract removes more water from each load—slashing dry time and cutting gas consumption in half, which accounts for a considerable boost in productivity and savings in utilities. Resch agrees. "The machine produces a better clean and our towels are nearly dry when they come out of the washer," she says. With a 7.0 cu.ft. cylinder capacity powerful airflow and

heat input, the E-Series Dryer can easily keep pace with the washer—getting laundry done faster.

The new equipment has already saved Great Lakes time and money after only a month of use. The clinic, located outside a small town in Wisconsin without sewer service, relies on a holding tank to store wastewater until it is removed. Due to a large volume of wastewater generated from the toplod, the tank was pumped more frequently at a cost of \$80 each time, an unavoidable expense. Thanks to the E-Series' sump-less design and engineering, the clinic now uses half the water. While most top-load washers use 31-40 gallons of water, the E-Series consumes as little as 13.4 gallons. As a result, the clinic saves on both water consumption and wastewater removal costs.

Thanks to the energy-efficient E-Series Washer-Extractor and Drying Tumbler, Great Lakes no longer struggles with piles of soiled laundry—better maintaining a safe and sterile environment. Thankfully, contaminated laundry isn't sitting around waiting to be washed and blood laden towels are no longer presoaking in the sinks. Now, through prompt and proper cleaning, laundry items are free of dangerous biohazards and contaminates that could harm animals or spread disease. Meanwhile, employees who previously battled to keep up with mounting laundry can now focus more directly on their jobs.

"The new E-Series washer has cut more than 20 hours off of our weekly laundry and has given me the peace of mind to focus on the job I was hired to do," says Resch. ▀