

## Ozone Laundry System Used At Saunders Hotels Cuts Hot Water Usage

### *Energy Savings Realized With Environmentally-Friendly Approach*

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By Cathy Urell

BOSTON— The environmentally responsible Saunders Hotel Group is satisfied with the ozone laundry systems it has installed at its two properties that have on-premise laundry facility.

“The linens are getting nice and clean with the ozone system and it is using a minimal amount of hot water,” said Tedd Saunders, executive vp of the Saunders Hotel Group, which owns three hotels in the Boston area plus a recently purchased Residence Inn by Marriott in Merrimack, NH.

While he could not put a dollar figure on the savings achieved with the ozone system, Saunders said, “we’re cleaning linens in an energy efficient and environmentally responsible way.”

“The ozone system is a huge help in terms of the results we’re seeing in the laundry,” added Frank Healey, director of operations and engineering for Saunders Hotel Group.

The Saunders properties are using ozone generators by IndustrOzone. The generators inject ozone into cold water during the wash process. The ozone works quickly and cleans by dividing the organic molecules in the water and causing dirt to break away from fabrics and disintegrate. The ozone then reverts to oxygen, leaving no chemical residue.

This process can reduce a laundry operation’s hot water usage by 70% to 100%, according to IndustrOzone. The system can mean a 20% to 40% savings in water and sewer costs, the company said.

It was further noted that since wash cycles are as much as 40% shorter and drying times are reduced up to 20%, linens processed with the ozone system last longer.

The two Saunders properties with on-premise laundry operations are the 212-room Lenox Hotel in Boston and the 208-room Comfort Inn & Suites Boston Airport. The Lenox facility also processes laundry for the 143-room Copley Square Hotel, a Saunders property located across the street.

The newly purchased Residence Inn in New Hampshire has a self-service, coin-operated laundry for guests.

“With the on-premise laundries at The Lenox and Comfort Inn & Suites, we have control over the process and we’re not waiting for clean linens to show up,” Saunders said.

The Lenox laundry has three staffers and runs multiple shifts, especially in peak seasons which include fall, late spring and summer. It is equipped with three 96-pound capacity washers by Milnor; three 80-pound capacity Milnor dryers; two ozone generators by IndustrOzone; and one Sharper Finish ironer.

"The Lenox handles between 2,500 and 5,000 pounds of laundry daily depending upon occupancy," Healey said.

The laundry at the Comfort Inn & Suites has two staffers working one shift. Its equipment includes two 55-pound capacity washers and one 95-pound capacity washer; and two 96-pound dryers and one 122-pound dryer, all by Milnor. It also has one IndustrOzone generator.

The daily laundry volume at the Comfort Inn is approximately 2,500 pounds, according to Healey.

The Saunders Hotel Group has in place a towel and sheet reuse program which is cutting down on the amount of laundry done on a daily basis, said Saunders. "This type of program is continuing to sweep through the industry; in fact, very few hotels don't offer the option. It's a great economic and environmental benefit, especially in longer term situations like extended-stay and resorts where guests are staying multiple days," he said.

When the program first began, guests at Saunders hotels were asked if they wanted linens changed on a daily basis, he noted. "Now we've switched to a policy where they are not changed every night unless requested," he said.

The percentage of guests who take advantage of the towel and sheet reuse program at Saunders properties is "quite high," he said. "At some hotels, the towel and sheet reuse program is the only thing they do in terms of environmental management. At our hotels, we make a concentrated effort to be environmentally conscious with many initiatives. Our guests see this and want to do their part."

In addition to using the ozone system in its laundries, other environmental initiatives at the Saunders hotels include installation of energy-efficient "low E" windows; using water-saving faucet aerators and low-flow toilets; replacing chlorine in pools with an ionization cleaning process; and using compressed natural gas vans for airport shuttle service.