

Clean — and Green

Antlers at Vail hotel airs its eco-friendly laundry secrets



(Left: Antlers at Vail's Laundry Manager Aniceto Quinones; Right: Exterior of the Antlers at Vail)

Vail, Colorado—"To my knowledge, they have the most eco-friendly laundry in the entire Vail Valley." That's what Bill Jones, owner of In-House Laundry Systems, says about the Antlers at Vail hotel. Like many larger properties, the Antlers at Vail services its laundry on-site, washing about 45,000 sheets and 35,000 bath towels a year—along with a mountain of hand towels, washcloths, bath mats, tablecloths and blankets. In-House Laundry provides the Antlers with its equipment and supplies; the 30-year-old company sells and services commercial laundry equipment and supplies to over 80 lodging properties in and around the Vail Valley and Aspen.

Hidden away from public view, most hotel guests never see or even think about the property's laundry room. But behind the scenes, hotels wash tons of laundry each month, generating plenty of expense—and pollution. Laundry operations in the average hotel account for two to five percent of a property's total electrical usage* and consume enormous quantities of hot and cold water—while at the same time generating a significant amount of detergent- and phosphate-laced wastewater.

Late last year, Jones installed an ozone machine on the Antlers' laundry equipment, allowing the hotel to use cooler water temperatures and save energy. The property also recently switched to a new phosphate-free detergent and a citric acid-based softener, which are more environmentally friendly than the typical phosphoric acid-based cleaning products. "The equipment we bought costs around \$16,000 and we expect our payback to be in three or four years," says Antlers general manager Rob LeVine. "The financial incentive helps, but 'going green' was even more important than the economics of it."

While it's commendable for a commercial institution to use an eco-friendly laundry system, the bottom line is: how well does it clean? "I'm extremely pleased with the cleaning power of the new equipment and the eco-friendly cleaning products," says Antlers Laundry Manager Aniceto Quinones. "The linen is as white as ever and spots are at a minimum."

The Antlers at Vail is a hotel offering 1-, 2-, 3- and 4-bedroom condominiums with full kitchens, fireplaces and outdoor balconies. Every room has all the comforts of home, and the property includes a new \$2 million heated outdoor pool, fitness room, two hot tubs, saunas and a heated parking garage. The property is also proud to be a Green Star rated business; Green Star (www.greenstarinc.org) is a voluntary national program that assists businesses in taking a hands-on role in caring for the environment. For more information, call 1-800-843-8245 or visit the web site at www.antlersvail.com.

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