Hotel laundry isn't just like at home:

HOW TO BOOST HOTEL LAUNDRY EFFICIENCY AND EFFECTIVENESS THROUGH CHEMISTRY

There's no mistaking the rigors and demands of hotel laundry compared to laundry done at home.

Yet one of the biggest mistakes we see in hotel laundry operations is the use of detergent with the same chemicals as those used at home.

Hotel laundry demands purpose-built commercial detergents powered by chemistry that's up to the task to help protect higher linen investments, manage high laundering cost and guest expectations, and improve cleaning results despite tougher soils, harsher stains, and harder use of hotel laundry.

Why hotel laundry isn't just like at home

When working with hotels to help them figure out why their linens aren't as clean and soft as they want, and their rewash and replacement costs are climbing, we often find that they are using popular detergents that rely on enzymatic action to remove soils and stains. Enzymatic detergents are based on the same chemistry as at-home detergents. While these detergents may do a satisfactory job at home, hotel laundry can present different challenges that require different solutions.

5 WAYS HOTEL AND COMMERCIAL LAUNDRY PROGRAMS DIFFER FROM AT-HOME LAUNDRY

1 TOUGHER SOILS

More frequent and tougher soils, from food grease and sunscreen to makeup and soils from pet guests.

2 HIGHER-FREQUENCY WASHING

Linens are washed more frequently which can cause graying and wear, impacting lifespan.

3 MORE SEVERE STAINS

Soils are often left on linens longer without being addressed, making them more difficult to remove.

4 RESULTS IMPACT BUSINESS SUCCESS

Clean linens are one of the first things guests notice and are a top factor in guest satisfaction.[1]

5 EFFICIENCY AND EFFECTIVENESS HAVE GREATER IMPLICATIONS

Cost per load, linen replacement cost and rewash rate are critical to a hotel's operation and bottom line.

Cost per load and linen replacement cost are critical performance indicators of a hotel laundry program – in addition to guest satisfaction – by which hotel laundry programs are measured.

[1] https://www.ahla.com/sites/default/files/2021_state_of_the_industry_0.pdf

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Use science to maximize laundry performance

Science plays a critical role in improving laundry results and establishing an efficient hotel laundry program. A variety of factors goes into determining the best solutions for each hotel, such as detergent chemistries, linen types, composition of common soils and stains, water conditions, laundry procedures and even guest profiles. Rigorous scientific testing helps determine which laundry detergent chemistries are up to the task of the hotel's tough laundry challenges and high guest expectations.

Understand the strengths and limitations of alkaline and enzymatic detergents

Through extensive testing we have found that alkaline detergents, or detergents with a higher pH, provide a more broadly effective solution for linen and laundry operations in hotels.

The chemistry in an alkaline detergent directly reacts with soils – and is especially powerful on blood, body oils, makeup, food oils and greases and other tough soils. The alkalinity acts like a pickaxe, breaking apart bonds between the soils and the linens so the soil can be completely washed away.

Enzymatic detergents, which have a lower pH, work in a similar way but the difference is in scope and strength. Enzymes can work great against mild grass stains, basic sweat stains, light food stains and others while alkalinity delivers reliable cleaning power against the much broader range of soils and more intense stains in hotel laundry.

How to protect linen investment and reduce operating costs

Frequent concerns we hear about alkaline detergents are that they are harsh or corrosive and that another chemical is needed to cancel out the high pH to protect guests. These misconceptions can raise concern for hoteliers trying to extend the life of their linens and reduce operating costs. The truth is that alkalinity has been used in commercial and even industrial laundries for decades without evidence of increased linen replacement costs.

In fact, 86% of linens are discarded due to stains – not linen wear.[2]

This means that improving stain removal is a more effective, reliable way to extend hotel linen life expectancy and reduce linen replacement costs.

By addressing a much broader array of soils and reliably removing tougher stains, alkaline detergents can help reduce rewash and linen replacement costs due to stains.

86%

of linen rejects are due to stains and lack of whiteness vs. **5%** due to wear and tear.[2]

Additionally, a second chemical is not needed to cancel out the high pH. Wash formulas are designed to rinse out all residual chemistry, including alkalinity, before the final bath where softener is applied. Sours are available for the final bath when needed to combat the natural pH and mineral content of water, helping ensure linens are at a skin friendly pH and free from mineral deposits before use.

[2] Ecolab in Market Linen-Life Research, June 2014

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Choose chemistry that's right for your operations

Hotel and commercial laundry operations are different than at-home laundry – different challenges, expectations, equipment, linen and soil types, water conditions and more. It's important to understand or partner with a provider who understands the science behind your specific needs and challenges and can match laundry chemistry to the demands of your operations.

Understanding the strengths and limitations of different types of detergents and using those best equipped to your hotel laundry demands can help decrease operational costs through reduced linen replacement and labor costs and improve guest satisfaction by providing clean, white, soft and fresh towels and linens.

Learn how you can optimize your laundry operations

ECOLAB.COM/HOTELS

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Dr. Katie Hurley has a Bachelor of Arts degree in chemistry from Carthage College and an M.S. and Ph.D. in chemistry from the University of Minnesota Twin Cities. She spent the first part of her Ecolab career with RD&E developing solutions for on-premise laundry and warewashing operations where she led the development of several large-scale programs. Dr. Hurley currently trains field associates to ensure they are safe, confident, and competent to service customers who use the products she helped develop.

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Kirsten Weeks has a Bachelor of Science degree in chemistry from the University of Wisconsin Eau Claire. As a member of the Ecolab RD&E team, Kirsten develops laundry products and programs for use in the lodging, long-term care, and facilities segments. In addition, she helps troubleshoot customer issues and identify the appropriate laundry products to solve the problem.

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