

Calif. Laundry Rule Imposes Strict, New Standards

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Sacramento, Calif.—A tough new laundry law in the nation's most populous state, designed to curb water and energy use by commercial washers, is making multifamily property owners and managers here look at new ways of doing the wash.

The **California Energy Commission's** (CEC) new efficiency standards for commercial washers—in force since January—are the most stringent in the nation. The CEC regulations (formulated in response to passage by the state legislature of a bill known as AB970) require that all front- and top-loading commercial washers sold in the state comply with the new law.

Commercial front-loading washers must now meet a modified energy factor (MEF) of 1.26. MEF measures

the amount of laundry that can be washed and dried with one kwh of electricity. The higher the MEF, the more efficient the clothes wash.

By 2007, commercial washers here must also use less water per load to meet new water-factor limits of 9.5 gallons per cubic foot of basket or tub capacity.

The new regulation has had some impact on costs.

"The [new] requirements have resulted in the equipment that we purchase going up by about \$20 per [machine]," said Adam Coffey, president and CEO of California-based **Web Laundry Services Co.**, which maintains approximately 200,000 washers and dryers at multifamily and student housing properties.

"There is a slight increase for having California-certified machines," added Dick Casey, director of multifamily sales for **Alliance Laundry Systems**, which offers three core models to meet California guidelines. "It may impact vend prices in the future."

Currently, a laundry list of other states are weighing passing similar legislation—a cause of concern to some, especially if laundry providers are required to comply with a patchwork of varying rules.

"We can't make 48 varieties of machine to meet different standards for different states," noted Casey, who predicted compliance chaos if other states follow California's example.

Others think the new California regulations are simply misguided.

"The legislation is silly," Coffey said flatly. "The [CEC] missed the mark because the regulation only impacts commercial laundry—and there are far more domestic [machines] in use than commercial."

And industry groups, such as the **Multi-Housing Laundry Association** and the **Coin Laundry Association**, call the CEC rules unnecessary because the industry is voluntarily shifting to more energy-efficient machines to cut utility expenses.

Some see a silver lining in these new efficiency standards—believing

they will potentially have a positive impact on costs.

Neil MacLellan, executive vice president at Boston-based **Mac-Gray**, a leading supplier in the multifamily laundry industry, opined that implementing tougher standards across the country and phasing out older, inefficient machines will ultimately lower costs for manufacturers, suppliers and consumers.

"New front-loading washers from Maytag can save apartment owners \$100 a year in energy and water," he observed.

Maytag Unveils Energy-Efficient Top-Load Washer

Newton, Iowa—**Maytag Commercial Laundry** celebrated the 35th anniversary of Earth Day by introducing a new, environmentally friendly machine: the Energy Star-rated Maytag Commercial High Efficiency Top-Load washer which, according to Maytag, serves the interests of both conservation and commerce.

It saves natural resources by reducing water usage up to 25 percent, and it also is an energy saver, an important consideration against the backdrop of spiking energy costs. And the new washer exceeds the 2007 state energy regulations for commercial washers that select states have already adopted.

Moreover, the energy and water savings of the new washer does not come at the expense of wash performance, according to Maytag. Based on areas such as rinsing and gentleness, there is virtually no drop in performance between it and traditional top-load washers.

The new machine also features innovations that save people time: It is equipped with an extra-large lid and tub opening to make loading and unloading easy. The Maytag ComputerTrac controls provide ease of use through one touch operation and display instructions, time remaining in the cycle and more.



As savvy multi-housing owners and managers know, the key to a successful laundry room is to make it as inviting and attractive as possible. And those looking to go an extra mile for style may want to consider adding a splash of color. Earlier this year, Sears added three stimulating shades to its line of Kenmore Elite He41 [sic] washers: Pacific Blue (a deeply saturated slate blue), Champagne (a beige color with flecks of iridescence) and Sedona (a deep red-orange terra cotta color).