

# Condominium Home Owners Association

A non-profit association serving strata owners since 1976

Bulletin: 200-050

**Headline: Harness the Full Profit Potential of your Laundry Room:** Amenity Oriented Laundry Rooms can Enhance your Building , Increase Revenues and Reduce Utility Cost

Publication date: June 2005

Publication: CHOA Journal

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In today's competitive market, Strata Corporations and Property Managers have to provide amenities that attract prospective purchasers, keep owners happy, generate new revenue and reduce costs. A well functioning laundry room can help achieve these goals.

A new wave of laundry equipment and service offerings is responding to these challenges - they are designed to provide more profitable, superior amenities.

The first of these offerings is the high-efficiency washing machine, also known as the "front load" or "HE" washer. Not only does this equipment yield water savings of 46% over traditional top-load washers\*, it provides residents with superior performance and convenience.

In fact, this new technology reduces costs three ways: through its greater capacity; reduced hot water usage and by providing extremely high water extraction in the spin cycle to reduce dryer utility costs.

A recent study by the City of Toronto\*\* found that after replacing traditional top-loading washers with high-efficiency washers, total savings were 46% in water costs, and 67% in laundry water heating costs\*\*\*. Residents also benefit from high-efficiency washers. Because there is no agitator, the machines are gentler on clothes and have a 32% greater capacity than traditional equipment. They hold large items like bedspreads, blankets, sleeping bags and rugs.

When comparing "in-unit" laundry equipment versus common area laundry rooms, U.S. studies\*\* have shown that free-running in-unit laundry equipment is used 3.5 times more frequently than "pay for use" equipment. The surveys found that each in-unit washer used an average of 11,797 metered gallons of water annually. Machines in common area laundry rooms averaged only 3,270 gallons a year per apartment unit served. That amounts to 8,527 excess gallons of water per suite per year!

It is important to note that apart from the loss of revenue and higher utility costs, in-unit connections can create substantial water damage, humidity, noise, and water and sewage back flow problems for both residents and owners.

The challenge for stratas is to provide a central laundry facility that is efficient and competes effectively when compared with in-unit laundry equipment (and local laundramats).

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\* Multi-residential High Efficiency Clothes Washer Pilot Project, administered and delivered by the City of Toronto Works and Emergency Services and the Toronto Housing Company, May 2000.

\*\*\* Based on water and sewer cost of \$0.94/m<sup>3</sup>.

\*\* Multi-housing Laundry Association Water Usage Survey.

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The most significant innovation in laundry room amenities, and the technology of most potential benefit to multi family buildings, is the smart card. Smart cards offer residents a safer, more convenient and more economical laundry facility. They provide numerous other advantages over coin-operated equipment, both for the consumer and the Strata Corporations.

Smart cards have proven to increase laundry room revenue an average of 12%, up to 30%. Strata Corporations increase their revenue from a central laundry room even if a price increase accompanies the upgrade. Residents tend to use the laundry facility because it is more convenient to stay home and spend a few extra cents than to leave the building and worry about having the correct change.

By removing cash from the building, smart card systems can eliminate vandalism and burglary, making the laundry room a safer place.

Laundry rooms using smart card systems are simply better – they show well to prospective residents, and enhance the building's value. It has been found that regardless of building demographics, residents love smart cards and consider them a very positive amenity.

While card systems provide residents with increased washing and drying options, they can also provide owners with expanded monitoring capabilities and provide new revenue and income control opportunities outside the laundry room. Such examples include common area and parking access, plus monitoring visitor parking and payment, all in one card.

To compete in today's multi-residential market, it is necessary to offer innovative services that will bond residents to the building, reduce costs and increase revenue. Residents will not reward technology, but they *will* reward innovative services that provide choices, make their lives simpler and more convenient. Nowhere is this clearer than in laundry services, an often overlooked and misunderstood amenity.

*For further information about Coinamatic's SmartCity<sup>®</sup> and Laundry Care Centre<sup>™</sup> programs, visit [www.coinamatic.com](http://www.coinamatic.com), or call Mary Chiarot at 1-800-361-2646*

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