

## Greening up the laundry room

Hotel installs equipment that saves hot water

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**Vail, CO Colorado**  
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VAIL — The clean, neatly stacked laundry in the basement of the Antlers is bright white. But, apparently, it's green, too.

Recently installed ozone machines allow the Vail hotel-condo complex to use 80 percent less hot water for the thousands of sheets and towels it washes every year.

"We all need to be more sensitive, more sustainable," said Antlers General Manager Rob LeVine.

Antlers at Vail general manager Rob LeVine an eco-friendly washing machine he says using 80 percent less hot water cleaning tens of thousands of sheets and towels a year.

**Kristin Anderson/Vail Daily**



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### Ozone facts

- Made up of three oxygen atoms (symbol is O3).
- Highly unstable, which makes it a powerful cleaning agent.
- The Antlers' machine uses a high-voltage electrical arc to split apart O2 and create O3.
- Has the same scent you may notice after a rainstorm.  
Source: Clean Designs.

The machines cost \$16,000, an amount that LeVine said the hotel should recoup in energy bills within three or four years.

Ozone, which is injected into the wash water, is a reactive form of oxygen that acts as a natural cleaner.

"We're replacing the energy of hot water with the energy of ozone," said Bill Jones, owner of In-House Laundry Systems, which sold LeVine the machines.

The Antlers was the first hotel around here to get the ozone machines, but the St. James in Beaver Creek and the Little Nell in Aspen have recently followed suit.

The 90-room complex washes 45,000 sheets and 35,000 bath towels a year. Laundry makes up from 2 percent to 5 percent of the Antlers' electricity bill.

You can't read a hospitality trade journal these days without finding at least one article on green practices, LeVine said.

And that trend has been evident here. Vail Resorts announced last year it would buy wind credits to offset its electricity use, and it also announced an environmentally friendly village called Ever Vail it wants to build in West Lionshead.

LeVine says his hotel has been committed to the environment even before the latest green craze, citing its purchase of wind credits, its recycling efforts and its status as an Eagle County "green star" hotel.

The Antlers also recently started using a phosphate-free detergent and a citric acid-based softener, which are more environmentally friendly.

So do guests want green laundry?

"Not a single person has said, 'We're staying here because you have ozone in your laundry,'" LeVine said.

The green practices may not attract more people to stay at the Antlers, Levine said, but it might keep some people coming back year after year.

"It makes them feel good about staying here," he said. "It might be enough for them to come back."

And the next environmental initiative for the Antlers? LeVine said he's looking into solar panels for the roof.

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