



Limestone Correctional Facility (courtesy of ADOC)



UT Tumble Dryer



UniLinc™ Control



UW Series, 125lb washer-extractor

Alabama Department of Corrections

28779 Nick Davis Road
Harvest, Alabama

No. of Inmates: 29,000
No. of Prisons: 30

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CASE STUDY



CORRECTING THE LAUNDRY

HOW THE ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS TOOK TOTAL CONTROL OVER ITS LAUNDRY OPERATIONS

The Alabama Department of Corrections offers incarcerated inmates a chance to work off some of their restitution and court costs, and earn money for personal items through its in-house employment program. But like any job — regardless of location — there are bound to be some issues with employee performance.

Take Limestone Correctional Facility, Capshaw, Ala., where inmates work in the on-premises laundry room washing sheets, blankets and clothing. Once their shift has ended, inmates are allowed free time, where they can participate in recreational activities such as basketball, watching television, playing games and making personal phone calls.

Many of the laundry employees were finding shortcuts to complete laundry faster in order to expand their free time privileges. However, this did not go unnoticed. Inmates began to complain about the cleanliness of their linens and clothing; many of which were delivered still soiled. The facility initially thought it was the laundry equipment underperforming; however with new state-of-the-art equipment controls from UniMac, distributors were able to identify the real problem and find a solution fast.

THE EQUIPMENT

The Corrections Department recently received an economic stimulus grant to help cut prison utility bills by upgrading to energy-efficient equipment. The expectation is that the department will save more than \$2 million a year in costs across its 30 facilities. When surveying how the department could use the grant, department heads determined a portion should be spent on updating aging laundry equipment, specifically in Limestone.

With new advancements in technology, laundry equipment has become more efficient. Utility costs for a washer-extractor that is 15 years old can be as high as \$28,600 a year. Equipment built today will cost approximately \$24,500 in utility costs annually.

On-premises laundry distributor David Antonio, Sales Representative of Southeastern Laundry, Marietta, Ga., was contacted to install new laundry equipment. The Alabama Department of Corrections has been a customer of Southeastern's for more than 12 years.

Southeastern installed seven 125-pound UW washer-extractors, six 170-pound UT tumble dryers and four 75-pound UT tumble dryers at the Limestone facility. The new washer-extractors are equipped with the UniLinc™ control and offer 200 G-Force extraction rates, which removes excess water in the wash leading to decreased dry-times and reduced gas or expenses.

The UniLinc control provides reports that highlight machine start and stop times, and idle time in between cycles, helping guards monitor inmate performance. It also records



SERIOUS ABOUT LAUNDRY.

CASE STUDY

when inmates cut cycles short and when the machines are not loaded to capacity. With 30 programmable water levels, administrators can customize loads and reduce water costs. Since the cycles can be preprogrammed, operating the machines is simple.

“The machines are really easy to use,” said Bert Ousley, Administrative Services Officer, Alabama Department of Corrections. “You select the cycle and push start. And the ability to run management reports is something we really value.”

SOLVING THE CLEANLINESS MYSTERY

Shortly after the machines were upgraded, prison officials started receiving complaints from inmates regarding the quality of wash. Initially officials thought there was an issue with the equipment mix, however, that was not the case.

Antonio pulled UniLinc’s management reports and found that the inmates were intentionally choosing improper cycles because they wanted to complete their work faster to extend their free time.

“When I looked at the reports, I saw that the inmates were not choosing the appropriate cycles for the wash,” said Antonio.

Ousley was amazed when he saw what the actual problem was.

“The system is very thorough and helped us learn why linens and clothing were still dirty after the wash,” said Ousley. “With this feedback, we were able to immediately take corrective action, something we wouldn’t have been able to do without UniLinc.”

CORRECTING THE ISSUE

To combat the laundry challenges, Southeastern set up a training course on which cycles to use for administrators and prison guards who also act as laundry managers.

Southeastern was also able to limit the available cycle options on the UniLinc control so inmates could only select appropriate wash options.

SAVINGS

Utility savings have also been seen throughout the prison after the installation of the new machines. With the upgraded washer-extractors, and controls that offer water-saving features, the department estimates it will save thousands of dollars a year in water costs.

As the Alabama Department of Corrections continues to outfit its facilities with energy efficient equipment, officials have said they will only use UniMac machines because not only do they reduce utility usage, but they also help improve the on-premises laundry inmate-employee performance.

“We have UniMac machines from the mid-90s that are still running perfectly, so we know the company makes a reliable and durable product,” said Ousley. “And now with UniLinc, UniMac offers the total package for any corrections facility looking to take complete control over its laundry operations.”



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