



LAUNDRY EQUIPMENT



# FAIR OAKS LAUNDRY™ CLEAN. GREEN. EXPRESS

An eco-inspired full-service laundry where people feel comfortable, safe and clean, Fair Oaks Laundry™ delivers on its tag line—“Clean. Green. Express™.” Occupying a highly visible street corner near Old Town Pasadena, Calif., Fair Oaks Laundry draws customers from all walks of life. The eco-friendly laundry combines high-efficiency, high-speed Girbau laundry equipment with a gamut of craved services and amenities appealing to professionals, singles and families alike.

*“Now, rather than using a dirty coin laundry, customers can enjoy checking their morning email while having a cup of coffee,” says owner Gary Thompson. “Focusing on a great customer experience is at the core of our business model and it’s paid off for us.”*

The 4,500-square-foot laundry is card operated, fully attended and offers fluff-and-fold, pick-up and delivery, vending machines, free WIFI, video games, flat-screen TVs, and a 60-minute wash and dry. It’s the culmination of Thompson’s vision—a laundry offering time savings, efficiency and cleanliness.

## ExpressWash Laundry Equipment

Thompson’s efforts to create an environmentally friendly laundry keyed on its equipment – Girbau ExpressWash Washers and ExpressDry Dryers – which drastically cut water, electricity and natural gas usage, while offering customers a quicker wash and dry.

*“I wanted to use the best equipment we could find,” he says. “I wanted a freestanding washer store because energy costs continue to rise. Those without freestanding washers are suffering because utilities are costing them more.”*

At Fair Oaks Laundry, Girbau ExpressWash freestanding washers provide more energy-efficiency than traditional hard-mount washers. They also reach extract speeds of 354 G-force, which allows customers to wash and dry loads in less than an hour. The washers, with such high extract speeds, remove

more water per load when compared to traditional hard-mount machines, which produce extract speeds of approximately 75 to 200 G-force. So, at Fair Oaks Laundry, loads dry 40 to 50 percent faster using considerably less natural gas and electricity. Because dryers run less

*“Even if it costs more money, it’s worth if it lessens our carbon footprint”*

often they experience less wear-and-tear and use less natural gas. This allows Fair Oaks Laundry to serve more customers

per day, which is especially critical during busy weekend hours.

## Saving Water, Natural Gas and Electricity

*“Clothes come out of the washer almost dry,” says Thompson. “People are shocked at how quickly their laundry is done, and they are happy to pay for that convenience because time is money. They think we have really good dryers, which we do, but I tell them it’s really our washers.”*

Open just 18 months, Fair Oaks Laundry already exceeds the national average of turns per day, with just 14 percent of revenue consumed by utilities. That’s really good in any laundry, according to Thompson, but especially one that’s so big. Fair Oaks Laundry features 45 ExpressWash Washers, six 75-pound capacity Washers, and a mix of Girbau dual-pocket stack drying tumblers in 30- and 45-pound capacities.



Working alongside Gary Thompson - on the Fair Oaks Laundry project and future laundries - is Van Merrill, of Merrill Laundry Consulting.

## A Totally Green Store

Also lessening the laundry's carbon footprint are solar tubes and T-8 lighting; high-efficiency heating equipment; a roof that better insulates for less cooling and heating inside; as well as low-flow faucets and toilets. "Even if it costs more money, it's worth it if it lessens our carbon footprint," says Thompson.

## Card and Video Systems a Plus

Because he lives in Los Angeles, where traffic is thick, Thompson is especially grateful for his card and surveillance systems. From a remote laptop, tablet or cell phone, he can view the store via the security system's on-premise video cameras and use the Card Concepts card system to run reports that detail equipment usage and revenue, or launch in-store promotions. "The card system allows you to go into the exchanger remotely and issue cards, check what machines are doing, or find out how much money was generated that day," says Thompson. "The remote card and video access allow me to see what's going on so I can respond immediately if there is a problem."

## The Customer's View

Customers are also card friendly. "When we first opened, people came in with coins, so we helped them out by explaining the benefits of the card system," says Thompson. "Now they love it." The system allows Thompson to reward loyal customers by adding bonus dollars to their cards, issue new cards, and track card usage in black and white. That's something Fair Oaks Laundry customers appreciate, along with the store's multiple services.

## Timesaving Services

While self-service customers benefit from getting in and out of the laundry in an hour, others take advantage of timesaving fluff-and-fold service. "We enjoy a high traffic count and great visibility because of our location," says Thompson of Fair Oaks Laundry. "We work off of that to get drop-off clients." Drop-off business has grown monthly, according to Thompson, and now makes up 17 percent of the store's total revenue. Big families, men between the ages of 18 and 40, busy moms, and commercial clients make up the laundry's drop-off

clientele mix.

With multiple laundry service offerings under one roof, Thompson enjoys several revenue streams, including video games and vending machines, which contribute 11 percent of total revenue.

It's a package Thompson hopes to replicate. "We are very happy with the store as a business," he says. "I wish I had 10 of them. We are working on that."

Working alongside Thompson - on the Fair Oaks Laundry project and future laundries - is Van Merrill, of Merrill Laundry Consulting. "He's guided us through the process and helped with laundry design and equipment layout," says Thompson. "He is exceptional and we couldn't have done it without him." Working with Merrill, Thompson hopes to develop multiple Fair Oaks Laundry stores sharing the same services, equipment and trademark.

