

EXPRESS LAUNDRY CENTER/DOG WASH DEBUTS IN MILES CITY



APRIL 2012 • By Haley Jorgensen

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Owners Shane and Rebecca McKinney relish their new laundry just as much as customers relish its cleanliness, convenience and personal service. Recently, the couple purchased and renovated a Subway store anchored by the popular fast-food restaurant—McDonald's. "We bought the building and converted it to an Express Laundry Center," says Shane. "We felt like it was a fabulous location across from McDonald's. We love this business and can't wait to get to the laundry every morning. Our customers say it is hands down the nicest laundry they've ever been in."

Laundry clients are privy to comfy leather recliners, soap and snack vending machines, video games, free Wi-Fi, flat-screen televisions, high-speed Continental laundry equipment, and the adjoining Sage's Dog Wash. Open from 6 a.m. to 11 p.m. daily; the Express Laundry Center is fully attended from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Saturday.

The High-speed Washer Benefit

The McKinneys worked closely with Tom Millman when designing their store layout and equipment mix. Millman owns and operates Washtime Industries, a laundry equipment distributorship based in Greeley, Colo. After careful research, the couple selected Continental high-speed, freestanding washers and complementing



With Continental ExpressWash™ Washers and complementing drying tumblers, the McKinneys can provide their customers with a 60-minute wash/dry promise.

Continental drying tumblers for the store. The new Express Laundry Center harnesses high-speed Continental ExpressWash™ Washers engineered to significantly reduce utility usage and deliver a 60-minute wash/dry. Because the washers are freestanding, they installed easily without bolts or concrete foundations.

Unlike traditional hard-mount washers, which reach extract speeds between 75 and 200 G-force, ExpressWash™ machines produce up to 381 G-force extract speeds.

Because high-speed washers remove more water per load than hard-mount washers, laundry loads dry 40-50 percent faster. This shortens wash/dry time for customers—getting them in and out of the laundry sooner—and reduces electricity and natural gas consumption.

Additionally, the Express Laundry Center also saves water. There are no top-load washers in the store, and as a result, the laundry saves significantly on water and water heating costs, according



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to Millman. A typical top-load washer consumes 30-40 gallons of water per load, he says. By comparison, the Express Laundry Center's 20-pound capacity ExpressWash™ Washers are front-load machines using just 13.4 gallons of water per load with quality wash results.

Altogether, utility costs—water, sewer, gas and electrical—represent a miniscule 8 percent of Express Laundry Center revenue, according to Shane and Rebecca.

Because the McKinneys selected freestanding ExpressWash™ Washers, they successfully differentiated their store with a 60-minute wash/dry promise. On average, a customer can wash a load of laundry in 19 minutes and dry it in 24 minutes, attests Shane.

"Customers are in and out faster," he maintains. "Typically, in less than 50 minutes, laundry is washed and dried." This is a unique feature only an Express Laundry Center can provide!

Drop-off Services Bolster Bottom Line

So, unlike any other store in the area, the Express Laundry Center delivers time-saving convenience, which extends to the drop-off services customers crave.

"Our drop-off service is really big. We market to everyone, from homeowners and professionals to people who rent and don't have washers at home. People are busy and want to save time," says Shane. The laundry caters to truck drivers, business owners, families, motels, restaurants and care homes—anyone needing a hand with laundry.

"Our city had a drycleaner that closed

down, so we contract with a drycleaner out of town and provide drop-off drycleaning," he adds. "We have a lot of satisfied customers who were desperate for that service."

"We keep one of the 20-pound capacity washers and one of the 30-pound stack dryers in the back, reserved for heavily soiled wash-dry-fold," Shane adds. The

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Express Laundry Center—open just a year—generates 40 percent of its revenue through drop-off services.

In total, the new laundry boasts 22 ExpressWash™ Washers, including 16 20s, three 30s, and three 40s; two Continental 75-pound capacity PowerLoad Washer-Extractors; two 75-pound capacity, single-pocket dryers; and two 45- and eight 30-pound capacity dual-pocket stack dryers.

"We have a customer who has used our laundry from day one," says Shane.

"She has five kids with no washer or dryer at home. On Sunday, she brings about 28 loads of laundry to the store. She told us it used to take six to seven hours and 90 bucks to finish her laundry. Now, using our store, she does it for \$35 in two or two-and-a-half hours."

How does she do it? "She uses the big washers which cost less per pound and saves money on the dryers," says Shane.

Simplifying life further for customers, the McKinneys placed dual-coin acceptors on the laundry's bigger machines. Thus, the change machine is a double-service coin changer that dispenses dollar coins or quarters. "This saves customers time and they don't have to lug tons of quarters around. Instead they can use a few dollar coins," says Shane.

Sage's Dog Wash

Complementing the Express Laundry Center is Sage's Dog Wash—the first and only coin operated self-service dog wash in Miles City. In its own corner of the laundry, separated by a glass partition, pets undergo the ultimate washing experience as laundry customers look on. Sage's Dog Wash features a separate entrance for simple access. "Our laundry customers can see the dog wash and vice versa," says Shane. "It's good marketing. They complement each other." Pets are dried using the built-in blow dryer, or by hand with towels, which are provided.

A one-stop solution, the Express Laundry Center provides customers an unrivaled 60-minute wash/dry; a place to wash pets without the mess; and convenient drop-off services that save time.

To discover more about the Express Laundry Center, visit www.expresslaundrymc.com.

To discover more about Continental laundry equipment, visit www.continentalgirbau.com.