



Employee visibility shows noticeable improvement in these before (left) and after (right) photos recently taken at Mission Linen Supply's Chino, CA, plant following the installation of energy-efficient lighting.



Mission Linen Supply Goes Green

Helping the environment also helps Mission's bottom line

By Keri Kleven

As one of the largest privately held companies in the textile service industry, Mission Linen Supply is setting an industry standard for running an environmentally friendly operation. Providing linens, uniforms and related products through more than 50 facilities in California, Arizona, New Mexico and Oregon, this family-owned and operated company based in Santa Barbara, CA, has realized that becoming "green" is not only right for the environment but also good for business.

Seeing the light

Founded in 1930, Mission most recently has focused on reducing its environmental impact by implementing energy-saving solutions throughout two of its California facilities. Working with Lime Energy, a nationwide leader in energy-efficiency projects, Mission

Linen was able to reduce its lighting expenses by more than \$5,500 annually in its Oceanside, CA, facility and more than \$37,000 annually in its Chino, CA, plant. With ROIs of 47% and 82% respectively, these projects paid for themselves in just over a year.

Both facilities not only experienced great energy savings due to the installation of new lighting, but they also have better, brighter environments. An entirely new lighting layout was designed for the Oceanside facility that better accommodates the needs of the space as well as those of the employees. The lighting upgrade at the Chino facility included motion sensors that were installed throughout infrequently occupied areas. This saved even more energy.

Overall, Mission Linen Supply has seen up to a 50% reduction in its lighting costs with no reduction in the illumination of its plant. In fact, depending on the area of the facility, a 10 to 50% *improvement* in lighting levels is visible.

Mark Saposnik, CEM, corporate engineer for Mission Linen, says, "Both projects went exactly as planned and the realized energy savings have met or exceeded project estimates. In Chino alone we reduced our electrical usage by 300,000 kWh per year and at the same time improved lighting levels in the work areas."



Another view of before (right) and after (left) images of the Chino plant with its new lighting system that not only saves electricity, but brightens the plant floor for employees.

Through local utilities, due to the efficiency projects implemented by Lime Energy, Mission has been awarded just under \$30,000 in incentives. Mission Linen is continuing to work with Lime Energy to explore additional opportunities for energy-efficiency projects throughout their facilities.

More ways to save

In addition to the recently completed lighting projects, Mission has always had the goal of offering earth-friendly, cost-effective solutions to customers. This includes removing harmful waste products from wash water before it goes down the drain, using less water throughout the wash process, and recovering heat from wastewater to allow for more environmentally friendly laundering.

Excess heat also is recovered from boilers using boiler stack economizers, thus further reducing the need for natural gas. On average, Mission laundries are reducing the quantity of water they use by over 20% and also conserve natural gas and water by reusing rinse water as wash water.

Conserving electricity has also become key to running an efficient business for Mission Linen Supply. Scheduling their heaviest work on off-peak hours helps prevent brownouts. Installing energy-efficient equipment also allows Mission to consume less electricity. Other than lighting, the primary focus on saving electricity has centered on the installation of variable-speed air compressors and variable-speed drives for process pumps. This type of equipment will adjust itself to the demand of the plant—ramping up when the demand is high, and operating at a reduced level during periods of

light demand. This results in substantial savings in electricity.

In an operational environment where utility rates are rising daily, no business can afford to ignore opportunities to combat this problem. In recent years, utility rates alone have had a major impact on the profitability of textile service companies. Looking closely at your facility as a whole, including your lighting and HVAC, as well as all of the other energy-consuming equipment, can open a whole new arena for energy savings.

Len Pisano, executive vice president of business development at Lime Energy says, "The textile rental industry is in a position to have a major, positive impact on the environment. Any industry that consumes great amounts of electricity can benefit by implementing energy efficiency projects, such as those offered by Lime Energy. Simple, affordable changes to lighting and HVAC systems can have a noticeable impact on a company's bottom line—in addition to the benefits they provide to the environment. Becoming good corporate citizens in today's business world should be at the top of every executive's priority list. Starting with 'green' projects is the way to go." ■



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