



Putting WaterSense® to Work

Laundry Day Means Big Savings for San Antonio, Texas, Hotel

Sector: Hotels; Focus: Sanitary Fixtures and Equipment

Project Summary

With tourism being the second largest industry in San Antonio, Texas, San Antonio Water System (SAWS) realized that water efficiency upgrades in hotels could amount to major water and energy savings. As a result, SAWS created the WaterSaver Hotel program, which offers participating hotels a comprehensive approach to water conservation that includes rebates for laundry technologies as well as assistance in retrofitting sanitary fixtures.

Water use in restrooms and laundries can account for nearly half of a hotel's total water use. Built after 1992, the Westin Riverwalk already had high-efficiency toilets installed but recognized that reducing its laundry facility water use could result in additional water and utility cost savings. Looking to curb water waste in its laundry facility, the Westin Riverwalk Hotel approached SAWS about participating in the program in 2011.

Through the program, the Westin Riverwalk replaced three 125-pound washers and one 55-pound washer/extractor with high-efficiency models. These replacements resulted in a 45 percent reduction in water use. In addition, the hotel worked with SAWS to install a last-



Westin Riverwalk reduced its overall water use by 65 percent through water-efficient laundry facility upgrades.

rinse, first-wash reclaim. This simple water recycling system reuses water from the final rinse for the first wash of the next load. Because final rinse water can almost always be reused without prior treatment, these systems can save between 10 and 35 percent of the water needed to wash a load of laundry. The last-rinse, first-wash reclaim helped Westin Riverwalk increase its water savings by an additional 20 percent for an overall 65 percent reduction in laundry water use. Specifically, water use was reduced from 2.82 to 0.99 gallons of water per pound. Because the Westin Riverwalk averages seven loads per day at 240 pounds per load, these laundry efficiency projects account for more than 2.2 million gallons of water saved per year.

Case Study Highlights



- **Hotel:** Westin Riverwalk Hotel
- **Location:** San Antonio, Texas
- **Number of guest rooms:** 473
- **Water savings:** Reduced laundry water consumption by 65 percent, saving more than 2.2 million gallons of water per year or 6.75 acre-feet.
- **Cost savings:** \$20,000 in water, sewer, and energy costs annually.

Westin Riverwalk's laundry upgrades were made more affordable through the WaterSaver Hotel rebate program. The hotel's initial \$79,000 investment was offset by \$27,000 worth of qualifying rebates. Westin Riverwalk's estimated annual water and sewer savings total approximately \$11,000, with nearly \$9,000 in additional annual energy savings each year. The payback period for the hotel was 2.6 years, with water and utility cost savings continuing to provide payback for years to come.

Acknowledgements

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