

# Laundry Operators See Green

Conservation and green laundry rooms are likely to be hot topics at Multi-Housing Laundry Association conference. **By Donna Kimura**

## HIGH-EFFICIENCY TOPLOAD WASHERS

Speed Queen reported that it is field testing high-efficiency commercial topload washers that will meet or exceed 2007 Department of Energy commercial-washer efficiency standards.

The new lineup will be available in coin-slide operation, electronic coin drop, or card models. The washers will meet the new standard by reducing hot water consumption with an automatic temperature control that meters the exact amount of hot water for hot and warm washes.

Speed Queen said the new washers will be its most efficient, meeting the 2007 standard with a modified energy factor (MEF) of 1.26 or greater and a water factor of 9.5 gallons or less.

The toploaders will join the company's front-loading Horizon model, an Energy Star-qualified unit that uses 14.5 gallons of water and has an MEF of 2.2.

Laundry-room operators serving apartments and other facilities will gather at a Multi-Housing Laundry Association (MLA) conference Oct. 15-17 in Las Vegas.

APARTMENT FINANCE TODAY caught up with MLA President Dan Terheggen to find out what's on the agenda.

### Q What will be the hot topics at MLA's fall conference?

A Conservation and green laundry rooms will be discussed at length. We've known for some time that the common-area laundry room is very water- and energy-efficient by its nature, saving 300 percent more laundry water and 500 percent more energy than in-unit machines.

Our member companies are becoming increasingly aware of a market-demand for H-Axis, or high-efficiency machines. We'll explore how we can better integrate and encourage conservation through our laundry rooms.

We'll also be talking about security issues, credit card use in laundry rooms, and call center operations.

### Q What are the big issues that MLA is monitoring this year?

A With our business being so closely tied to water issues, we're keeping our finger on the pulse of what's happening in the water-conservation arena.

The nation is beginning to become aware that water-conservation is an important issue. The EPA [Environmental Protection Agency] started a water-efficiency program called WaterSense, there's a new national group forming as we speak

called the Alliance for Water Efficiency with backing from the EPA, and cities from all over the country are enacting policies to curb excessive water use. We think the MLA has a place at that table and want to be a part of what we think is a very important issue.

### Q What key trends are you seeing in the industry?

A I hate to sound like a broken record, but the trend is definitely "going green." You see it every month in this magazine and the other multi-family publications. Energy efficiency is being highlighted not just in multifamily, but in every aspect of our lives.

More companies are recognizing the market for high-efficiency machines and more developers are seeing the value in designing buildings that use less energy and are more environmentally friendly. Part of that is the inclusion of common-area laundry rooms instead of in-unit machines.

### Q What new amenities are you seeing in laundry rooms?

A There are some very exciting new technologies in laundry rooms, but none that are catching on as rapidly as technologies that allow for cashless transactions. Over the next few years we'll continue to see rooms with machines equipped with card readers. Gone will be the days of weighting your pockets down and jingle-jangling down to a dark, dingy laundry room.

Today you can swipe a card in a convenient, well-lit, well-ventilated, state-of-the-art, green laundry room. It's not just technology that's driving innovation—it's the entire environment and experience of the laundry room. ■