



Energy  
Efficiency  
Program

# Marberry Cleaners increases operational efficiency by 50 percent



## High-efficiency washer helps to improve overhead, labor and production costs



**Project description:**  
Tunnel washer



**Nicor Gas incentives:**  
\$54,443 in total incentives



**Energy savings:**  
54,443 therms saved per year

Marberry Cleaners and Launderers, a family owned business, was established in 1911 as a full-service dry cleaner, launderer and furrier. Today, they're a third-generation cleaning company with an emphasis on dry cleaning, home delivery and commercial laundry, with six locations throughout the western Chicago suburbs, processing approximately 8.5 million pounds of customer goods per year.<sup>1</sup>

Experiencing significant business growth in a rapid period of time, the Marberry family realized their washing system was not sustainable. Production was energy intensive and expensive, and washing took 22 hours per day. By collaborating with the Nicor Gas Energy Efficiency Program, Marberry Cleaners received energy efficiency rebates and took control of their operating costs.

<sup>1</sup>[equipment-international.com/marberry-laundry-batch-tunnel-washer-installation/](http://equipment-international.com/marberry-laundry-batch-tunnel-washer-installation/)



## The project

The Marberry's researched and planned for an equipment overhaul at their commercial site in North Aurora that would also reduce energy and water consumption. "We use a lot of water, electricity and natural gas. There's no way around it. But through our research, we learned that we could optimize the way we use energy with energy efficiency equipment," said David Marberry, Marberry Cleaners partner.

Marberry Cleaners installed a new PulseFlow® tunnel counter-flow washing system with four automated dryers in July 2014. The tunnel washer handles heavy duty laundry loads and replaces the traditional free-standing washers and dryers. "With this new equipment, fully sorted laundry continuously comes out every two minutes. The old equipment ran 45-minute loads. There is also drastic reduction in double sorting laundry," said Shonda Biddle, Nicor Gas energy advisor. "This doubles Marberry's production each day."



## Working with Nicor Gas

David learned about the Nicor Gas Energy Efficiency Program through an equipment manufacturer. The tunnel washer was installed within a year and Nicor Gas helped offset the cost of the investment by providing Marberry Cleaners \$54,443 in incentives for their upgrades.

Marberry Cleaners wanted to continue saving and reduce their energy consumption. They continued working with the Nicor Gas Energy Efficiency Program to identify additional ways to improve the facility and found that one of the boilers was not burning at maximum efficiency. The Nicor Gas Energy Efficiency Program provided a plan of action to improve the equipment with a boiler tune-up, pipe insulation and steam trap survey. "When you work with Nicor Gas, they're looking out for you because they're looking to maximize your incentive." David said.

"Energy efficiency is just good business. It incentivizes us to look under the hood a little further. This equipment and these upgrades are a competitive advantage."

— David Marberry,  
Marberry Cleaners partner

## The experience

The improved facility now has a high-efficiency tunnel washer with a lifespan of 25 years. Marberry Cleaners benefits from estimated annual savings of 54,443 therms. Washing an average of 300 loads per day, David said that while the amount of laundry has remained consistent, the new washer completes all loads in half the time. Along with reducing energy, water, chemical usage operating time and improving chemical performance, the washer provides the highest quality results. "We routinely send out swatches of linens to independent labs. With our new equipment, we receive 100/100. That's incredible. That score is a result of our new tunnel washer," David explained. "We know we made the right choice. We took a lot of risk. But knowing we would get a rebate was the deciding factor."

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