

Reducing our environmental impact

We recognise the environmental impact of our operations and understand the associated risks and opportunities. With the scarcity of natural resources there is a need for us to continually look at ways of reducing our consumption.

To help achieve our environmental objectives, we follow the guidelines set by the European Textile Services Association, an industry body representing the textile rental services sector in Europe.

We have identified four areas that are of particular importance to us, which our business units continually focus on:

- Water use;
- Energy consumption;
- Use and disposal in effluent of cleaning detergents; and
- Transport-related energy consumption.

Our business units are taking the initiative in the following ways:

Water recovery – We use water recovery systems in the majority of our operations, as they reduce water consumption by between 20% and 25%. Reduced water consumption also results in lower energy used to heat up water for washing, and subsequently less energy waste.

Reducing heat and energy loss – To reduce heat and energy loss we install new technology in key parts of our operations where most energy is used, and where there will be a significant environmental benefit. In our laundries this typically means boilers and driers. New technology has helped us reduce energy consumption by recycling hot water, recovering energy from boiler exhaust gas, monitoring tumbler temperatures to optimise drying time and recovering high pressure steam for use elsewhere in the laundry process. New technologies have typically reduced energy consumption by between 10% and 30%.

Reducing the amount and concentration of cleaning detergents used and disposed of in effluent – We work closely with our detergent suppliers to find ways to shorten our washing processes, decrease the use of water, reduce water temperatures and reduce our use of detergents. We have already made significant progress in this field, for instance by installing water recovery/recycling systems that reduce the volume of detergent solids disposed of in effluent. These initiatives have typically also resulted in a reduction in detergent usage of between 20% and 30%.

Shortening delivery distances – We continually work towards meeting and exceeding national and local legislation requirements in this area. We regularly review our vehicle routes to ensure the most efficient use of our fleet resources and fuel.
