

DID YOU  
KNOW?

- The Regina laundry processes approximately 7.3 million lbs of soiled linen per year – primarily for the RQHR and Cypress health regions.
- About 300,000 soiled linen bags are needed for processing this linen.
- A full nylon bag of soiled linen weighs 20 lbs – a full plastic bag weighs 15 lbs.

*better care*

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 15, 2013

# Linen Collection System Decreases the Spread of Germs and Saves Money

A new initiative in health care linen processes will substantially improve infection prevention and control. The new system replaces the nylon bags that are currently used to collect soiled linen with plastic bags.

Preventing the spread of infection is a high priority when considering health care laundry and linen. It impacts patient safety, worker safety and the safety of anyone visiting the health care facility. The new plastic bags provide a much more effective barrier between the soiled linen and those who are in close proximity to it. In addition, the processes that are being developed during the transition to using the plastic bags will further prevent the spread of infection from the soiled linen.

There are several other advantages to using the plastic bags:

- The new bags improve worker safety because they are lighter to lift and are easier to stack.
- Using the plastic bags leaves a smaller environmental footprint. They do not need to be laundered - saving water, energy and the use of chemicals. And they can be recycled.
- The cost to launder the nylon bags is eliminated. It is expected that the health system will save up to \$100,000 a year in processing costs.



Nylon Bag  
Collection



Plastic Bag Collection

The conversion to plastic bag use is happening region by region.

Region	% Converted by October 1, 2013
Saskatoon Health Region	100%
Prince Albert Parkland Health Region (North Sask Laundry)	Victoria Hospital only
Regina Qu'Appelle Health Region	0%
Sun Country Health Region	99%
Sunrise Health Region	100%

“We made the switch to plastic bags in early August,” says Shirley Wheeler, Regional Director, Environmental Services for Sun Country Health Region. “I believe this is a great move for infection control and odor control and is an even greater step toward staff injury reduction which is one of our health region’s strategic goals. It will also help us reduce costs.”



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