



CASE STUDY

2016 Outstanding Business of the Year* company turns up the heat on savings with PG&E's Solar Water Heating Program

Advanced Linen Service's success story

Gordon Hickman, co-owner and president of Advanced Linen Service, is in the business of cleaning up—and raising the bar for energy management excellence among small businesses nationwide. As the visionary behind this fast-growing, forward-thinking cleaning company, Hickman understands what lies at the heart of his business—energy. From firing the boilers and washing the goods, to heating the irons and presses, every part of the process starts with power.

Hickman worked closely with experts from the Solar Manufacturing Group and PG&E to harness renewable energy for his business by installing a solar water heating system and participating in the rebate program. Together, this dynamic team brought effective energy solutions, enhanced productivity and an increase in profitability to a company that is on the cutting edge of conservation and renewable energy.



Together, Building
a Better California



Bringing solar water heating into the fold

Advanced Linen Service serves more than 700 restaurants and hotels throughout the San Francisco Bay Area, cleaning more than 30,000 pounds of laundry daily. After recently relocating to a larger plant to accommodate their rapidly expanding business, Hickman and his partners wanted to find a way to save money over the long-term while also protecting the environment.

“A solar water heating upgrade made perfect sense for our company. We’re a heavy soil plant that requires a lot of hot water to get our clients’ linens and uniforms clean. If we don’t have gas to fire our boiler, nothing can happen.

Talking with other companies who have implemented solar heating systems for a similar purpose is usually the best way to determine its success prior to initiating such a project. We quickly discovered that there wasn’t anyone to talk to. Advanced Linen is the first in our industry to utilize solar water heating at such a large scale—and we couldn’t be happier.”

Loads of savings—positive results

According to the California Solar Initiative (CSI) Thermal Program,* Advanced Linen Service’s solar water heating project is one of the largest installed since 2013, and the savings are staggering:

\$354,859

PG&E rebate

2.3 Years

Estimated payback period

17,576 Therms

Annual gas saved

205,444 Pounds

Annual reduction in carbon emissions

16 Cars

Equivalent cars removed from roads for one year

*California Solar Initiative (CSI) Thermal Program is a ratepayer funded rebate program for customers of the four California investor-owned utilities. Each investor-owned utility in California directly administers CSI rebates; with the exception of SDG&E whose CSI Program is administered by CSE.



Ironing out the numbers— PG&E rebates and energy financing

Financing the investment was a major part of Advanced Linen Service's decision to approve the project. With PG&E rebates through the CSI Thermal Program and favorable financing from Renewable Technology Developments Inc., a private financial institution specializing in renewable energy projects, Advanced Linen Service was able to pay for its solar water heating system.

"We assembled a dream team for managing the project, but first our accountant had to determine that this would be financially feasible, which ultimately he did.



I realized the solar water heating upgrade was a success about three months into it when our business grew, but our bills stayed the same. What resonated with me even beyond the finances, however, was witnessing the system doing its job. The boilers are able to maintain the high degree of heat that we require thanks to the solar roof collectors that are saving energy while heating up the water to ninety degrees, and sometimes even hotter in the summer."



A bright future

The solar water heating upgrade not only reinforced Advanced Linen Service's position as a burgeoning small business, but also positioned them as an environmentally conscious company.

"We are a small business that looks at the big picture. Saving on carbon emissions today makes us a good neighbor, and we hope all of our energy efficient decisions going forward will contribute to the future for everyone."

HOW TO GET STARTED

To learn more about available solar water heating rebates to help your business manage energy consumption and reduce costs visit pge.com/solarhotwater.