

THE LAUNCH OF NOVO HEALTH SERVICES AND A UNIQUE COLLABORATION AMONG INDUSTRY LEADERS



MAY 2017 • By Haley Jorgensen

Girbau Industrial (GI) and Lavatec recently joined forces to equip two Novo Health Services (Novo) laundries — a 46,000-square-foot Nashville plant and 61,000-square-foot Atlanta facility. Operational since 2015, the Novo plants serve 16 hospitals and 24 clinics — processing a cumulative 16 million pounds of healthcare laundry per year. Yet, the three-phase project leaves ample room for growth. “Nashville has another 7 million pounds moving into contract phase now,” said Novo Vice President Greg Cox. Additionally, Novo is exploring one to two new buildout locations in the next 12 to 18 months.



Lavatec tunnel system.

While it may be unusual for major industrial laundry equipment manufacturers to collaborate on projects of this scope, it isn't for GI and Lavatec. Since 2015, the companies have held a mutually beneficial collaboration agreement that blends their extensive and complementing product lines into the industry's most diverse and expansive offering, according to Seth Willer, GI national sales manager.

“In the case of Novo, our collaboration allowed us to fill equipment gaps to best fulfill the client's goals,” he said. In doing so, Willer and Lavatec Vice President of Sales Keith Ware worked in sync to meet Novo's unique quality, throughput, labor, space and production needs. Other key contributors were GI distributor Russ Arbuckle, of Wholesale Commercial Laundry Equipment S.E.; design/builder ARCO/Murray Project Manager Justin Hearld and Project Superintendent Tony Delmonico; E-Tech Overhead Rail System; and of course, Novo President and CEO Karl Phillip and VP Cox. Key to Novo's early success is a combination

of Lavatec and GI equipment, including GI open-pocket washer and dryer lines; GI feeding, ironing and folding systems; and a Lavatec 14-module tunnel washing system. Upon the completion of phase three, Novo will be equipped to process up to 66 million pounds of laundry annually.

Outshining the competition in terms of quality and consistency is a primary Novo goal. “Greg and Karl want to provide healthcare facilities with a higher quality product than their competition, while conserving energy and labor,” said Willer. “That means a high-quality finish on sheets and gowns, better wash quality, and consistent folds and stacks,” he said. Throughput is equally essential.

Planning, Installation, Plant Development

The plants were developed simultaneously through careful cohesive collaboration. “GI and Lavatec worked with us on the scope of the project, as well as the build-out, equipment specifications, projections, installation and training,” said Cox. “Together, they handled

some of the build-out obstacles, which always seem to arise in a project of this scope. They delivered a quick turnaround and met critical deadlines.”

“We were able to complete the startup and commissioning of the equipment in the Nashville plant only 106 days after obtaining the building permit,” added Hearld. “Girbau and Lavatec were both involved in the project at very early stages of design and construction, making coordination throughout the construction and equipment installation process very seamless. With a tight project schedule and strict deadlines for plant operation, this coordination was paramount to the project's success,” Hearld said.

“It was like working with one cohesive unit,” Arbuckle added. “GI provided floor plans, equipment mixes and 3D animated plant designs to Novo.” Meanwhile, ARCO/Murray led engineering and final plan development. Together, GI and Lavatec directed the equipment installation while communicating with ARCO/Murray's on-site superintendent.

“Once the equipment was installed, Lavatec and GI went above and beyond to provide technical support and training to keep machinery productive until a permanent team was established at the plant,” said Ware. “Our goal was to ensure Novo grew with their training and productivity.”

Turning Out a High-Quality Product

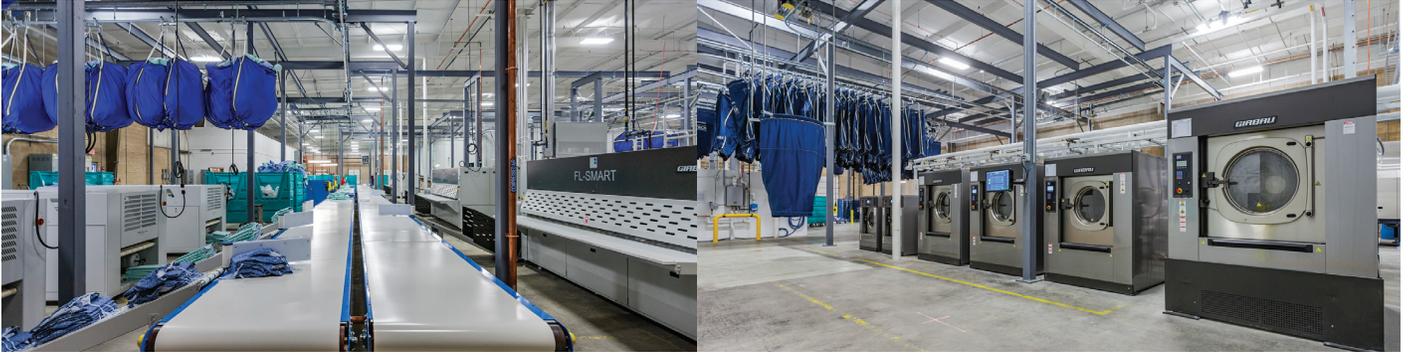
“Our customers want quality, quantity and on-time deliveries,” said Cox. “Beyond that, they are looking for a true partnership — folks who can help them with linen conservation, while honoring obligations and developing internal relationships.”

Conveyor & Tunnel Systems

Each facility harnesses a Lavatec 14-chamber, 132-pound continuous tunnel washer with an LP-Series Water Extraction Press and five



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Novo's Girbau Industrial washers and folders deliver high-quality results and maximum throughput.

TT-Series Dryers. Soon, during phase two, a second identical system will be added at each location. Each fully automated and hands-free tunnel system churns out 3,900 pounds of laundry per hour. An E-Tech overhead rail system automatically transports soiled and clean laundry to appropriate plant locations ensuring no cross-contamination.

Open-Pocket Wash/Dry & Dry Work Folding

In addition to the tunnels, the plants also include GI wash lines featuring a number of 55- to 255-pound capacity, soft-mount HS-6 Series Washer-Extractors and 85- to 170-pound capacity GT Dryers. Each day, anywhere from 500 to 5,000 laundry pounds are cleaned using the highly programmable washers, which reach extract speeds up to 387 G-force. Flexible programmability and high-speed extract ensure healthcare items are properly cleaned and quickly dried. Foltex Folders (five in Nashville and three in Atlanta) are used to automatically fold and stack dried towels. The Atlanta facility runs blankets through a GI FL-Smart Folder/Stacker — creating consistent folds and stacks. In Nashville, hospital blankets are processed via Chicago Feeders and corresponding GI FL-Smart blanket folders/stackers.

Girbau Industrial Flatwork Finishing Lines

Meanwhile, damp sheets and pillowcases go straight from the tunnels or open-pocket washers through a GI finishing line. “The quality is exceptional,” said Cox. “There is none better. The GI feeder, ironer and folder require very little maintenance. We are taking damp linens through the GI ironing lines and getting the nicest quality I’ve ever seen from an ironing system.”

The GI DRB three-station feeders automatically straighten and feed damp items into one of three PC-120 natural gas, heated-chest ironers. The PC-120 Ironers deliver high performance, programmability and quality — offering complete control over every ironing parameter, according to Willer. Equipped with two, 48-inch diameter rolls, each PC-120 Chest Ironer is up to 95 percent efficient. Finally, items automatically move from the ironers through one of four GI FL-Smart Folders. Offering an advanced control and multi-program operation, the folders perform one or two primary folds on one, two or four lanes. “They automatically fold and stack a variety of ironed items using a combination of blades, a reversing conveyor and air-jet technology,” said Willer.

This results in consistent stacks that are easy

to transport and inventory, according to Cox. “We prebuild carts with specific folded laundry and deliver them internally to each hospital unit or floor. We also provide inventory service. We use software that captures what we send out to each hospital and unit. It tracks usage patterns and we help our customers conserve linen usage.”

Status and Growth

So far so good, according to Cox. Phase one is complete with the startup of both plants. Phase two, which is in progress, will bring more finishing equipment and another tunnel system to each location. Finally, the completion of phase three will result in a production projection of up to 66 million laundry pounds per year from three total locations.

“We’re meeting all labor, efficiency and revenue expectations,” said Cox of the Atlanta and Nashville Novo plants. “Production standards are continuing to increase; we’re hitting projections and exploring new growth opportunities.”

Discover more about Novo at www.novoheathservices.com, Lavatec at www.itusa.com and GI at www.girbauindustrial.com or 800-256-1073.



Girbau Industrial thru-station feeders automatically straighten and feed items through a corresponding ironer.