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The Eco Laundry Company's low-temperature machines will reduce your own carbon footprint. Photos by Luján Agusti

An eco-friendly spin on the dirty business of laundry

BY SCOTT STIFFLER

Published: Wednesday, August 8, 2012 12:53 PM CDT

Launched in Buenos Aires two years ago, The Eco Laundry Company (ELC) has taken its first step towards the ultimate goal of becoming a global franchise — with the recent establishment of an eco-friendly dry cleaners and drop off wash & fold.

Yearning for a clean slate after many years spent in the employment of a Wall Street investment firm, freshly minted entrepreneur Jean Calleja partnered with friend and ELC founder Phillipe Christodoulou to bring environmentally sustainable cleaning to the heart of Chelsea.

“Beyond using biodegradable products and energy efficient machines,” says Calleja — who notes that in addition to offering industry standards such as biodegradable products and energy efficient machines, “our customers are reacting incredibly positively to what we do differently.”

Although every use of a washing machine requires the conspicuous consumption of water, ELC offsets the use of that precious resource with environmental initiatives designed to reduce each customer’s carbon footprint. “To date,” notes Calleja, “we have planted over 300 trees...and we’re just getting started!”

Each new customer is given laundry bags made from recycled cotton — and the free delivery service doesn’t even burn bicycle tire rubber. “We come to your door by foot,” says Calleja, who is willing to personally trek outside of their normal service area (14th to 24th Streets, from 5th to 11th Avenues) if that’s what it takes to make you go green.

Early reviews (this one found on yelp.com) seem to embrace that pioneer spirit and concern for both customers and the planet they live on. “We use this laundry service for our business,” noted one reviewer, who happened upon the business shortly after it opened in June. “When we found these guys,” the ELC convert recalls, “we were so happy. Not only do they pick up and drop off when they tell us they will, they are super friendly and accommodating. And, our laundry smells naturally clean (not chemical-ly). Great overall experience. Oh yeah and our first load of laundry came back in a great bag. Nice perk!”

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The Eco Laundry Company (249 West 18th Street, between Seventh & Eighth Avenues) is open Monday-Friday from 7am-7pm, and Saturday from 9am-5pm. For info, call 646 640 3906. Visit



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John Sutter says goodbye



I sold my newspapers last week. I found someone who believes in community journalism — its challenges and opportunities — who is willing to buy into the business of producing high-quality, original, local news reporting. The new owner is Jennifer Goodstein, and you will be hearing directly from her in coming

weeks.

Updated: Monday, August 6, 2012 10:23 AM CDT

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- Letters, Week of July 25, 2012
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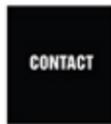
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