



## Mesa Laundromat Recognized as 2020 City of Santa Barbara Water Hero



Every year, the City of Santa Barbara Water Conservation Program honors an individual, business, or organization that has gone above and beyond in their water conservation efforts and serves as an example of resource efficiency in our community. The Mesa Laundromat has been awarded the 2020 Water Hero Award for significantly reducing water usage through upgrades to their washing machines.

The Mesa Laundromat has been an important part of the mesa neighborhood for 25 years and the current owners, Maribel and Lalo Rivera, have owned it for five years. “Since we took over we have been welcomed by the Santa Barbara community and the

mesa, we’ve got great customers who have been coming here for years,” said Mrs. Rivera.

Due to city and statewide drought conditions, the Riveras were motivated to look for opportunities to save water at their business. “During the drought we noticed that water levels were going down and we wanted to do our share and we felt that this was the best way that we could contribute to the city,” said Mrs. Rivera. In November 2018 they replaced 17 of their washing machines with newer, more efficient models. The old washers used an average of 60 gallons of water per load, the new high-efficiency washers use an average of 12 gallons per load. “The old washers were designed to hold a lot of water in the bottom of the drum, which is called dead water, which has no use. The new washers have a better design which eliminates the dead water and that alone saves many gallons of water per cycle,” stated Mr. Rivera.

The Mesa Laundromat was able to fund the project, in part, by participating in the City’s WaterWise Survey and Incentive Program for commercial, institutional and industrial properties. The program entails City staff working with the business owner to identify cost-effective water efficiency upgrades and providing funding to help cover a portion of the cost. The Mesa Laundromat received a rebate of \$15,000 for the 17 machine replacements, saving about 24,000 gallons per month and over 280,000 gallons per year. The success of this project also spurred them to replace their older washers in their other laundromat, the Professional Wash Center in Carpinteria.



Due to the improved technology, this change has resulted in savings on both their water and sewer bills as well as their gas and electric bills. “The motors have inverter controls which makes the motor go faster with less

electricity consumption. Therefore, the laundry comes out almost dry so you spend less time in the drier, saving gas as well,” said Mr. Rivera.



The new washing machines have not only proven to be a benefit to the environment, but to the Mesa Laundromat customers as well. “Our customers are very pleased with the changes. They feel that the washers still perform well as far as getting their laundry clean and when we talk about the amount of water we’re saving everybody is very happy. We’re glad to hear all the positive comments we’ve gotten and we’ve have a lot more new customers because of that,” said Mrs. Rivera.

The Mesa Laundromat is committed to water efficiency and serving as a role model for sustainability. Congratulations to the Mesa Laundromat for being a Water Hero! For more information on Water Hero recipients, please visit [www.SantaBarbaraCA.gov/WaterHero](http://www.SantaBarbaraCA.gov/WaterHero).

