

Disposable Towels; Economical Yet Durable

By Valerie Sweeney

Disposable towels, or non-wovens, are used in many different areas of the carwash. Some washes use more than others, but no matter the application, disposable towels can play an integral role in your towel tool box, especially during COVID. Disposable towels/wipes also help to prolong the life of your terry and microfiber towels. Non-wovens typically cost between \$.05 and \$.15 per wipe depending on size, durability, packaging and thickness.

Options Abound

There are several non-woven disposable wipe options available to the carwash market. The choice of wipe depends not only on the application, but also on personal preference. Most companies that supply non-woven disposable towels offer these products in various packaging and dispensing options in order to best suit your location.

DRC, or double recycled cellulose, is a very soft, absorbent disposable wip-

er. It has a variety of uses, including general wiping applications, in lube shops, for detailing, or as a low-cost courtesy towel for your customers. Many people like DRC because it is a great cloth rag alternative, and costs pennies a wipe. DRC can usually be found in many dispensing options, including quarter fold, flat, pop-up and roll.

Spunlace wipers are also very popular in the car care industry. They are the most durable disposable towel option, and are also extremely absorbent. These wipes are lint free, making them great windshield towels.

Spunlace wipers also make great courtesy towels, or general shop rags, especially in lube centers. There are various thickness and color options (often red, white, or blue), and can be found as a quarter fold, flat or even convenient jumbo perforated rolls.

Applications

Courtesy towels are used by many carwashes throughout the Northeast. These are disposable wipes that you give to your customer. These wipes/disposable towels are given to those who want to touch up a spot on their car (especially on their windows). Courtesy towels help to prevent customers from “borrowing” your towels and “forgetting” to give them back. COVID-19 has affected many carwashes who no longer are leaving towels out for customers to borrow or share. Disposable wipes are a great alternative.

Some carwashes set up dispensers which release one wipe at a time to prevent people from taking more than they need. Others stack wipes up next to the tip box.

Another way to prevent people from taking more than they need is to have the cashier hand out the wipe, or the supervisor as he gives one last “thank you” to the customer.

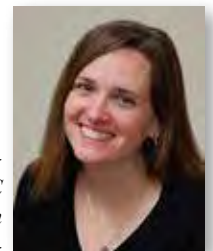
Disposable wipes are also very popular in lube centers. Once again, they can be used as general wiping rags for absorb-

ing grease and oil. These wipes are ideal for wiping parts, surfaces and hands. Many lube centers use rentals, which can prove to be costly. Not only is there a charge for the rag rental, but there are also extra surcharges including loss, environmental, etc.

Most carwashes use either microfiber or huck towels on the windows, but some do prefer to use a heavier hydroknit. They are lint free, absorbent, and work really well, especially reaching any corners of the window. A few locations that use microfibers on the windows choose non-wovens during the coldest of months since sometimes microfiber can semi-freeze, and cause streaking.

Non-wovens are very durable, and can hold up when saturated. They work well with many cleaners and can be used when detailing the interior of the car. They are thinner than microfiber or cotton towels, so they can be used to clean tight spaces that a traditional towel might not reach. Several carwashes offer a wet non-woven cloth-like paper wiper that they give to their customers to wipe off the dash themselves. This system works well for washes where the customer stays in their vehicle.

Having a supply of non-woven towels can help save money in the long run. It will prevent workers from using terry or microfiber towels where a low-cost wiper/rag is best suited. These disposable towels can also be used as a low-cost way to enhance customer service at the wash by providing courtesy or dash wipes. Your towel vendor should be able to provide you with various options, and help fit you with the wiper/towel that best suits your needs. NC



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