

The RNLI is the charity that saves lives at sea

River Thames wash takes on new meaning for RNLI's London lifeboat crew

Lifeboats News Release

Wednesday 9 November 2016

RNLI lifeboat crews in London are no stranger to river wash as they go about their business saving lives on the tidal Thames, but the term has taken on a whole new meaning with the donation of a super-powered washing machine.



Keith Cima, Helm at Tower RNLI Lifeboat Station

Pierre Maelzer

Girbau UK, a global supplier of commercial and industrial laundry equipment, has donated one of its HS-6008 high speed washers to Tower RNLI lifeboat station, the busiest of all 237 RNLI stations.

The new machine is perfect for dealing with the extremely large volume of laundry that needs to be cleaned and dried.

The new washer is perfect for coping with the station's large volume of laundry that needs cleaning on a daily basis and crucially provides reliable high-temperature disinfection as well.

Keith Cima, Tower RNLI Helm, said: 'Because London lifeboat stations are manned 24/7 with a crew and a lifeboat ready to launch in 90 seconds, the laundry throughput for both crew and casualties is prodigious. In addition, we need a high temperature to deal with river water and other contamination so a robust and reliable machine is a huge help.

'The donation of a machine from Girbau has revolutionised our laundry arrangements and is massively appreciated by all the crew, both full time and volunteers.'

Based next to Waterloo Bridge, Tower lifeboat station saves lives and responds to emergencies between Woolwich Ferry and Battersea Bridge, nearly 14 miles of the tidal River Thames. The station has had more than 6,000 call outs since it was established in 2002 and saved more than 275 lives.

The crew rescue hundreds of people from the river each year using the E-class Mk 2 lifeboat, which uses twin water jet engines, making it the fastest craft on the river.

The station's old washing machine was in constant use cleaning the large heavy-duty towels and blankets used to dry and warm people pulled from the water. It was also used to wash the crew's underlayers and thermals, essential for keeping them warm in cold temperatures and with wind chill. Previously the crew had been using a domestic machine, but this could neither cope with the volume and intensity of use, nor provide the required high temperature disinfection.

Girbau UK donated one of its commercial washers to the station in response to an appeal by Stuart Boyd, the Master of the Worshipful Company of Launderers. Stuart chose Tower RNLI as the charity the Company will support in his year as Master.

'When we heard about the tireless work of the RNLI, we were only too pleased to be able to offer our support in the form of a Girbau HS-6008 washer,' said Peter Marsh, Managing Director of Girbau UK

Notes to editors

Girbau UK is part of the Girbau Group, world-leading manufacturer of commercial and industrial laundry equipment for washing, finishing and handling textiles. With more than 55 years' experience and a commitment to customer service, Girbau meets the requirements of a wide variety of industries including hotels and guest houses, residential and nursing homes, hospitals, charities, leisure organisations, colleges, schools, sheltered housing, the emergency services, hairdressers, veterinary surgeries, kennels and catteries. Girbau UK offers a free laundry design service and its service department caters for all makes and models of commercial laundry equipment. For more information, visit www.girbau.co.uk

RNLI media contacts

Tim Ash, RNLI Public Relations Manager (London/East/South East) on 0207 6207426, 07785 296252 tim_ash@rnli.org.uk

For enquiries outside normal business hours, contact the RNLI duty press officer on 01202 336789

Key facts about the RNLI

The RNLI charity saves lives at sea. Its volunteers provide a 24-hour search and rescue service around the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland coasts. The RNLI operates over 238 lifeboat stations in the UK and Ireland and more than 240 lifeguard units on beaches around the UK and Channel Islands. The RNLI is independent of Coastguard and government and depends on voluntary donations and legacies to maintain its rescue service. Since the RNLI was founded in 1824, its lifeboat crews and lifeguards have saved over 142,700 lives.

Learn more about the RNLI

For more information please visit the [RNLI website](http://www.rnli.org.uk) or [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/rnli), [Twitter](https://twitter.com/rnli) and [YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/rnli). News releases, videos and photos are available on the [News Centre](http://www.rnli.org.uk/news-centre).

Contacting the RNLI - public enquiries

Members of the public may contact the RNLI on 0300 300 9990 (UK) or 1800 991802 (Ireland) or or by [email](mailto:enquiries@rnli.org.uk).

Categories

FUNDRAISING >
