

## Cabazon Outlets toilet seats sheathed with plastic



**BOB PRATTE, Gisela Brantley demonstrates the Brill system that covers toilet seats with plastic at the Cabazon Outlets.**

### **BOB PRATTE COLUMN**

**Linda Williams had a typical first-time customer's reaction of confusion followed by delight when she stepped into the deluxe bathrooms at the Cabazon Outlets along Interstate 10 between Banning and Palm Springs. Williams, a traveler from New Mexico, quickly became a fan of the Brill sanitary toilet system, which covers commode seats with fresh, clear plastic with a wave of a hand or push of a button.**

**The seat-covering system was installed in 2005 at the little but mighty, 19-store Cabazon Outlets just east of 130-store Desert Hills Premium Outlets. Despite its diminutive size, the Cabazon Outlets manages to attract a steady stream of customers with a Starbucks Coffee, an impressive assortment of store that includes outdoor sports outfitters and perhaps the cleanest, fanciest restrooms along Interstate 10 in the San Gorgonio Pass. The bathrooms help attract customers to the center, including shoppers from the next-door Desert Hills outlets, according to Caroline Thalasinis, general manager of the Cabazon Outlets. "They like our restrooms. The other outlet center doesn't offer seat covers," she said. She said toilet seats covered with fresh plastic for every use by the clever Brill system enhance the bathrooms' effectiveness as a marketing tool.**

The device was added to the toilets seven years ago mainly to dramatically reduce the frequency of pumping out the center's 10,000-gallon septic tank. Because of the high use of the bathrooms, the septic system's leach field could not keep up with the considerable amount of flushing. Thalsasinios said the tank had to be pumped ever few weeks. To make the septic system work more efficiently, the center installed the Brill seats. When customers push a button or wave their hand near a sensor, a clean, plastic covering is pulled over the seat. **The system eliminated the need for paper seat covers that contributed to filling the tank.**

The sanitary system both perplexes and pleases customers unfamiliar with the Brill system, according Gisela Brantley, a longtime Banning resident who has handled custodial duties at Cabazon Outlets since its opening 11 years ago. She might as well add Brill demonstrator to her job description. Some customers know about the device because they already have seen it in operation at places like Radio City Music Hall in New York, the women's restrooms at restaurants in Yankee Stadium and at major airports. Alan Brill, CEO of the toilet seat-sheathing company, proudly notes **that it saves women an average of 22 seconds it would take to use paper covers, which greatly reduces restroom lines.**

For others at the Cabazon Outlets, having a public toilet seat automatically covered with clean plastic is a new experience. Brantley quite willingly helps customers who are confused by the system despite instructions posted on bathroom walls. She shows them how it operates. When customers worry that the plastic might be reused, she opens the device and shows them how it draws vinyl from a roll more than 300 feet long and reels it in onto another roll for disposal. Thalsasinios said she often sees customers lead friends to a stall to show them the system. **She said it serves its primary purpose of reducing the need for pumping out the septic tank to about every six weeks.**

Count Williams, the shopper I met at the mall, among fans of the Brill system. Stepping into the bathroom, she at first was dismayed when saw the facility lacked paper seat covers. **She felt better when she read the Brill system instructions on the wall. She was ecstatic after seeing how it created sanitary conditions in the bathroom.** "It was really nice," she said. "You don't have to touch anything at all."

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