

Cleaning Matters®

Tips and Trends from The Soap and Detergent Association

January/February 2010

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Calendar of Clean

January is ...

- **New Year's Day: Jan. 1**
(See Clean Ideas article)
- **Martin Luther King Day: Jan. 19**

February is ...

- **Wear-Red Day: Feb. 5**
(See Red and White: Clean Them Right article)
- **White Shirt Day: Feb. 11**
(See Red and White: Clean Them Right article)

New Webpage - SDA Ingredient Central

One Online Stop for Cleaning Product Ingredient Information

You may have read that many cleaning product manufacturers are providing more information about the ingredients in their products. To help you find specific cleaning product companies' ingredient information, The Soap and Detergent Association (SDA) has launched Ingredient Central – www.cleaning101.com/IngredientCentral. This page describes where and how companies will provide information about the specific ingredients in their cleaning products.

“Checking out SDA Ingredient Central is an easy way for consumers to find out how SDA member companies are sharing information about cleaning product ingredients,” said Nancy Bock, SDA Vice President of Education. “This outreach effort is part of our industry’s ongoing efforts to provide consumers with more information than ever before about the cleaning products they use safely and effectively every single day.”

Ingredient Central evolved from the **Consumer Product Ingredient Communication Initiative**, developed by SDA, the Consumer Specialty Products Association, and the Canadian Consumer Specialty Products Association. The Initiative, launched January 1, 2010, provides consumers with information about the ingredients in products in four major categories: air care, automotive care, cleaning, and polishes and floor maintenance products.

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Web: www.cleaning101.com
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New Webpage - SDA Ingredient Central (cont.)

Consumers will notice that the Initiative allows companies to use a variety of formats to help them learn about the ingredients in the products they are using. Companies will be sharing ingredient information on the product label; on the company website; through a toll-free telephone number; or through some other non-electronic means.

Ingredient Central also provides more detailed information about the industry Initiative, as well as SDA's consumer **fact sheet** on cleaning product ingredient communication.

Check back frequently. The site will continue to evolve as companies provide additional information about cleaning product ingredients.

News Flash

Meet the 2009 It's a SNAP National Award Recipient

New Jersey school takes top honors

All Saints Regional Catholic School in Manahawkin, NJ, took top honors in the 2009 Healthy Schools, Healthy People, It's a SNAP National Award Program. Their path to national recognition and an all-expenses-paid trip for three to Washington, DC began with a survey of the state of handwashing at their school. From national surveys, the teacher, Barbara Hand-Panagis, parent volunteer Suzanne Ellis, and a group of sixth-grade students who called themselves "Team Bubble Trouble" knew that only 8% of boys and 20% of girls of middle-school age wash their hands with soap after visiting the bathroom. They also knew that 30% of people surveyed seldom or never washed their hands after sneezing or coughing and that 35% of people don't always wash their hands before eating. They wanted to see how they could change that behavior at All Saints. First, they canvassed the school and made the following observations:

- Bathrooms and classrooms were often out of handwashing supplies.
- Limited or no time was allowed to clean hands before lunch.
- There is limited handwashing education in schools.
- School is the perfect place to learn about handwashing.

Next, they implemented a fact-finding mission to identify the need for handwashing education.

Nurse's office survey: They asked the school nurse to query her patients about when they last washed their hands. They discovered that 30% of students either couldn't remember when they washed their hands or had last washed their hands the previous day.

Lunchroom study: The students provided hand gel and hand wipes in the cafeteria for a week. On Friday, they counted the number of students who "cleaned" their hands before lunch. Almost 80% of students did not wash their hands prior to lunch.

Classroom experiment: Fellow students' hands were cultured before and after they used several methods of hand sanitation: hand wipes, gel, bar soap and liquid soap. The first results showed that almost no one knew how to clean his/her hands properly. So, after some instruction, the culture test was repeated. They found that hand-sanitization gel and hand wipes were the most effective



— especially without instruction. They also found that proper instruction was critical for a high bacteria kill rate when using traditional handwashing methods (liquid or bar soap).

Student recommendations:

- Institute grade-specific hand-sanitation curriculums into all K-12 classes.
- Establish a daily hand-sanitation routine for students, faculty, staff and visitors to the school.
- Place reminder posters about hand sanitation in key areas of the school.
- Have hand-sanitation products readily available.

Student action:

The students produced an educational brochure that was distributed in the school, to the local health department and through a local pediatrician's office. They also posted signs and slogans around the school. All of these visuals featured Gerry Germ, whose call to action included the injunction to "Wash your hands now!"

To view the presentation that the All Saints Regional Catholic School students made at the National Press Club in Washington, DC, go to www.schooltube.com/video/47995/2009-SNAP-National-Award-Program.

Each year, SNAP Award applicants produce projects that demonstrate different ways of educating their communities about the importance of handwashing. They are evaluated on originality, creativity, ability to replicate results, evidence of teamwork and project impact. Will 2010 be your year to receive national recognition? The deadline for submissions for the 2010 SNAP awards is March 1, 2010. Information about the SNAP program and the awards can be found at www.itsasnep.org.

Red and White: Clean Them Right

Tips for bright and beautiful laundry results

February is the month to show off those red and white clothes. On National Wear Red Day, celebrated on Friday, February 5th, the color red, and particularly a red dress, serves as a banner to increase awareness about the ability all women have to improve their heart health and live stronger, longer lives. White Shirt Day, celebrated annually on February 11th, honors the men and women who participated in a sit-down strike at General Motors in 1937. On a day that recognizes workplace empowerment, the white shirts represent equal respect and treatment for blue-collar workers. And then there's the red that we wear on Valentine's Day and the red, white and blue that's a natural wardrobe choice on President's Day.

All of which means that February's laundry loads can create a few cleaning challenges! But Nancy Bock, Vice President of Education at The Soap and Detergent Association, has some guidelines that will wash away your concerns.

General Laundering Tips

- Sort by color: whites and/or lights in one load; darks in another.
- Read the garment care labels. It may be necessary to further sort the loads by water temperature (hot, warm or cold), bleach requirements (chlorine bleach, nonchlorine bleach or no bleach) and washing machine cycle (regular, permanent press or delicate/knits).
- Most red items should be laundered in a cold water wash, either by themselves or with other bright colors.
- For combo-colored garments, such as a red shirt with a white collar or a print on a red background, add a dye-trapping cloth to the wash. It is designed to absorb and trap loose dyes during laundering, locking them away so they can't redeposit on other clothes.

- Pre-treat stains before putting items in the washing machine.
- Before putting items in the dryer, check to make sure any stains are completely removed. Otherwise, the heat of the dryer may set them permanently.

Red Alert

Laundering red garments, particularly new ones, can present some additional challenges. That's because, in order to produce a bright, rich color, red fabrics are often over-dyed. When laundered, the color may fade or the red dye may transfer to other items. If the dye bleeds:

- Pre-treat the area and re-launder the garment in the warmest water that's safe for the fabric.
- Don't dry the garment until the bleeding is removed, as drying in a hot dryer may set the dye that has bled.
- Once the bleeding is removed, dry promptly. Dye transfer can also occur when damp items stay in contact with each other for a period of time.

Do the Whites Right

Read the fabric care label. The fact that the item is white doesn't necessarily guarantee that it's safe to use bleach, especially chlorine bleach. Factors such as the fabric's fiber content (including silk, wool, mohair and spandex), finishes (such as the flame-retardant finish on children's nightclothes) and certain trims will affect the item's suitability for bleach.

If bleach is a no-no and there are stains, pre-treat them with a pre-wash stain remover, check the cleaning product label first to make sure it is safe for the fabric, or presoak the item, using detergent or a presoak laundry product that's safe for the fabric. Mix the soaking agent with water, and then add the item. Minimum soaking time is 30 minutes; longer, as much as overnight, may be necessary.

New Headquarters for SDA

Sustainability in our mission and our home

The Soap and Detergent Association (SDA) is a one-hundred-plus member trade association representing the \$30 billion U.S. cleaning products market. SDA members include the formulators of soaps, detergents, and general cleaning products used in household, commercial, industrial and institutional settings; companies that supply ingredients and finished packaging for these products; and oleochemical producers. SDA and its members are dedicated to improving health and the quality of life through sustainable cleaning products and practices. SDA's mission is to support the sustainability of the cleaning product and oleochemical industries through research, education, outreach and science-based advocacy.

On August 1, The Soap and Detergent Association moved to its new headquarters. It remains in the heart of Washington, DC, but is now in one of the first office buildings in the District of Columbia that is designed for Gold LEED (Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design) Certification. SDA is particularly proud that its new location complements its sustainability mission. To learn more about LEED certification and the U.S. Green Building Council, visit www.usgbc.org.

SDA's new address is:

1331 L Street NW, Suite 650
Washington, DC 20005

SDA's main phone number remains the same:
(202) 347-2900.



Wipe out Those Flu Germs

Ways to get 'em before they spread

Although a clean bathroom is a boon to good health anytime of the year, during cold and flu season it's particularly important to be vigilant about germs.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the period when an infected person is contagious depends on the age and health of the person. Studies show that most healthy adults may be able to infect others from one day prior to becoming sick and for five to seven days after they first develop symptoms. Some young children and people with weakened immune systems may be contagious for longer than a week. And, once someone is exposed to the virus, the length of time it takes for symptoms to appear varies from one to four days, with an average of about two days.

Although cold and flu viruses primarily spread from person-to-person contact, you can also become infected from contact with contaminated surfaces. The best way to avoid becoming infected with a cold or flu is to wash your hands frequently with soap and water or with an alcohol-based sanitizer.

If another member of your household is sick, extra vigilance is required, warns Nancy Bock, Vice President of Education at The Soap and Detergent Association. The length of time that cold or flu germs can survive outside the body on an environmental surface, such as a doorknob, varies greatly. But the suspected range is from a few seconds to 48 hours – depending on the specific virus and the type of surface.

- If there is more than one bathroom in the home, assign one exclusively to the sick person.
- Be sure all bathroom sinks, as well as the one in the kitchen, are well stocked with soap and paper towels.
- Add disinfectant wipes to your next-to-the-sink assortments. Encourage family members to use them to wipe down faucet handles and doorknobs.
- Put alcohol-based sanitizers and disinfectant wipes in the bedroom, the den, the family room –anywhere the sick person is spending time.
- Since dry skin is often a by-product of dry weather and heated homes, a hand sanitizer with moisturizer can kill germs as well as help keep hands soft.

Cold and Flu Webinar Online

Listen and learn!

The SDA Cold and Flu Webinar, held on September 24th during International Clean Hands Week, is now available online for anyone who may have missed it. To listen in, go to <http://cleaning101.com/files/2009-cold-flu-webinar.wmv>. You can also download this webinar to share with others.

The webinar focuses on science-based information from trusted sources regarding the status and spread of the H1N1 virus. Handwashing and respiratory etiquette are stressed as critical to preventing the spread of H1N1. To emphasize this, presenters shared pertinent information such as the fact that the average person touches his/her eyes and nostrils approximately 15 times per day. Frequent handwashing helps ensure that the hands that do the touching are virus-free.

Resources for obtaining educational information directed at preventing the spread of the H1N1 virus are

shared, and listeners are urged to check them for the most up-to-date information on this pandemic. Here are just a few of the recommended sites:

- www.cleaning101.com - the Internet home of The Soap and Detergent Association
- www.itsasnaps.org - a hands-on initiative for middle schools that's designed to help keep students in school and learning by improving overall health through promoting clean hands
- www.washup.org - American Society for Microbiology
- www.cleanhandscoalition.org - The Clean Hands Coalition
- www.pandemicflu.gov - comprehensive government-wide information on seasonal, H1N1 (swine), H5N1 (bird) and pandemic influenza
- www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu - general information on vaccination, information for specific groups, statistics and more

Tell Nancy Your Handwashing Stories!



Tell Nancy Your Handwashing Stories!

In recent months, we've been encouraging readers of SDA's *Cleaning Matters*® newsletter to share their handwashing stories. Here are two of our recent favorites!

The Ice Cream Rule

Have you ever heard of the fictitious "five-second rule" – the one that says if food is dropped on the floor, it's still safe to eat if picked up within five seconds? Well, Laura Lee Peek from Springfield, Kentucky, sent in the handwashing equivalent of this urban myth.

It seems her husband returned from a public restroom, where he overheard one man asking his pal, "Aren't you going to wash your hands?" To which the buddy replied, "You don't have to unless you are going to eat ice cream."

While this "ice cream rule" may give us cause for a chuckle, it also provides a good opportunity to remind one and all that washing your hands before you eat is a smart, healthy practice – even if you don't plan to touch your food with your hands!

Visual Assistance

The Soap and Detergent Association both develops and supports programs that stress the importance of handwashing, such as The Clean Hands Coalition (www.cleanhandscoalition.org), It's a SNAP (www.itsasnep.org) and Hooray for Handwashing (www.cleaning101.com/HandHygiene), which is aimed at educating preschool children. Downloadable posters, handouts and other support materials are available to help communicate the messages.

The great response that Vickie Hadley of Fort Wayne, Indiana, had from her use of visuals should inspire others to follow her lead. Her poster, which she downloaded from www.henrythehand.com (a site that belongs to Dr. William Sawyer, a founding member of The Clean Hands Coalition), stressed important ways to prevent the spread of the H1N1 flu: to wash hands frequently and to avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. These two simple acts, if practiced by adults and adolescents, would significantly slow down the spread of the H1N1 virus, or other respiratory viruses. Says Vicki, "I distributed my poster at programs I present, no matter the topic or the audience. I made copies available for health fair participants, distributed the information to all the presidents of the Extension Homemaker organizations, had copies laminated and posted in all the restrooms in our building and in the restrooms during the county fair." People responded to the fact that the message was colorful, factual and to the point . . . and the frequent repetition got their attention.

Send Us Your Stories

We'd love to hear more from our readers! – Finally, an acceptable place to air your dirty laundry . . . Tell others how you coaxed those spots and stains from your favorite outfit. Do you have a funny story about what was left in pockets? What lessons have your kids learned the hard way while doing their own laundry? You decide what's next! Send Nancy an email at education@cleaning101.com and write "Tell Nancy a story" in the subject line.

Nancy Bock is Vice President of Education at The Soap and Detergent Association

Clean Ideas

Cleaning Resolutions for the New Year

Lighten your cleaning load with some easy-to-implement changes

If left to pile up, cleaning tasks can be overwhelming. So here are 9 ways to make cleaning easier in the New Year.

- 1. Manage the mail.** Even in our e-mail age, most people still get plenty of snail mail. Open it over a wastebasket or recycle bin so that anything unwanted quickly disappears.
- 2. Roll back the bed.** Replace fussy bedspreads with a duvet and duvet cover. The duvet itself makes bed-making easier. For cleaning, just pop off the cover and launder. It's faster and easier than washing a bulky comforter.
- 3. "Sweep" the house nightly.** Just before bedtime, do a walk-through. Put newspapers in the recycle bin, toss out the junk mail, put dishes in the dishwasher, hang up coats, sweaters, towels, etc. and put away anything that wandered out during the day.
- 4. Remove shower scum as you go.** A daily shower cleaner will keep shower and tub surfaces free of soap scum, mildew stains and hard-water deposits. Enlist everyone in the household to mist the surfaces immediately after they shower, while the walls are still wet and warm.
- 5. Double up.** A full set of cleaning supplies on each floor of the home keeps them in easy reach for spot cleaning.
- 6. Baskets for all.** Be sure there's a wastebasket in every room. Empty them as part of your nightly sweep.
- 7. Tote 'em.** Keep cleaning supplies in a plastic carry caddy so they're easy to tote from room to room.
- 8. Invest in some baskets.** Baskets in varying sizes are great repositories for toys, magazines, keys, remote controls, unopened mail and other everyday items that tend to take over countertops and tabletops.
- 9. Vacuum on the run.** A small, hand-held cordless vacuum makes quick pickup a snap. Consider multiples – one in the basement, one in the garage, one on each floor in the house.