

Cleaning Matters®

Tips and Trends from The Soap and Detergent Association

March/April 2010

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Calendar of Clean

March is ...

- **National Poison Prevention Week: March 14-20**
(See Clean S.P.O.T.)
- **National Potato Chip Day: March 14**
(See Clean Ideas)
- **St. Patrick's Day: March 17**
- **First day of spring: March 20**
(See Clean Ideas)

April is ...

- **National Youth Sports Safety Month**
(See Clean Ideas)
- **National Garden Month**
(See Clean Ideas)
- **National Walk to Work Day: April 2**
- **World Health Day: April 7**
(See Taking It to the Streets with AAFCS)
- **National Cleaning for a Reason Week: April 18-24**
(See Get Involved!)
- **Administrative Professionals Day: April 21**
(See Saying It with Flowers)
- **Earth Day: April 22**
- **Arbor Day: April 30**

Taking it to the Streets with AAFCS *National Collaborations lead to Community Actions*

The Soap and Detergent Association (SDA) can't put a price on the long term relationship it has with organizations like the American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences (AAFCS), who are dedicated to improving lives. "They have been long term partners for nearly 40 years says," Nancy Bock, Vice President of Education at SDA. She remembers that last June, SDA challenged AAFCS to encourage its membership of over 8,000 to get involved in educating the public about the H1N1 pandemic. AAFCS accepted the challenge and began to work almost immediately to raise public awareness about the benefits of proper handwashing.

The willingness of the members of AAFCS to get involved – along with this message from Kathleen Sebelius, Secretary of Health and Human Services; Janet Napolitano, Secretary of Homeland Security; and Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education, "**the most critical steps to mitigating the effects of 2009-H1N1 won't take place in Washington – they will take place in your homes, schools and community businesses**" – motivated AAFCS members to develop the "Taking it to the Streets" H1N1 initiative in partnership with SDA. This new initiative has gained incredible momentum to help individuals, families and communities prepare for cold and flu season now and in the years to come.

more



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Taking it to the Streets with AAFCS (cont.)

“After hearing about the threat of an H1N1 pandemic, I immediately thought about how AAFCS’ wide and diverse network could be used to educate individuals, families and communities. Other national and international family and consumer sciences organizations have been invited to join forces with us in this important endeavor worldwide,” commented Marilyn Swierk, AAFCS President.

Ms. Swierk believes that Family and Consumer Science professionals can provide valuable H1N1 educational information to the public both nationally and internationally through schools, seminars, workshops and civic engagement. Professionals can distribute appropriate information through materials, lessons, workshops, etc. They can also proactively engage other stakeholders on the community level and provide leadership for community education programs. For more information about “Taking it to the Streets” go to www.aafcs.org/H1N1.html.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimates that between 41 million and 84 million cases of 2009 H1N1 occurred between April 2009 and January 16, 2010. The CDC report for the week of February 26, 2010, states that flu activity is relatively low at this time, with most flu continuing to be caused by 2009 H1N1. However, flu activity, caused by either 2009 H1N1 or seasonal flu viruses, may rise and fall, but it is expected to continue for weeks. For further statistics visit CDC’s Flu View website <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/weekly/>.

SDA continues to make its free materials available to the public on its website at www.cleaning101.com/sda-cold-flu-toolkit and reminds everyone that handwashing is vital year-round and not just during cold and flu season.

News Flash

SDA to Become ACI – American Cleaning InstituteSM

New name reflects cleaning product industry's contributions to better living

Effective June 2010, The Soap and Detergent Association (SDA) will become the American Cleaning InstituteSM (ACI).

“Since 1926, SDA has been a leader in demonstrating the safe, proper and beneficial use of cleaning products,” said 2010 SDA Board Chair Jane Hutterly, EVP of Worldwide Corporate & Environmental Affairs, S.C. Johnson & Son, Inc. “SDA’s transformation to the American Cleaning Institute will make our information easier to access, more consumer friendly, and more relevant in the digital age.”

This new name and the accompanying tagline, For Better LivingSM, represent “what we stand for,” Hutterly added. “It’s what our products and ingredients are all about, describing how the cleaning products industry contributes positively to society.”

“Under the ACI banner, the Institute will still reflect our organization’s vision: to enhance health and the quality of life through sustainable cleaning products and practices,” said Ernie Rosenberg, SDA President & CEO. “The Institute will continue to support the sustainability of the cleaning products industry through research, education, outreach and science-based advocacy.”

A major redesign and relaunch of SDA’s website, www.cleaning101.com, will also take place in June. Information on cleaning product safety, benefits and proper use will be easier to access, more consumer friendly and more relevant to the digital age.

More information about SDA’s transition to ACI will be featured in the months to come on www.cleaning101.com.

Water and Cleaning Performance

How water can impact cleaning effectiveness

Water is a basic component of many cleaning tasks. But some attributes, such as mineral content, salt water and temperature, can affect cleaning power. Nancy Bock, Vice President of Education at The Soap and Detergent Association, takes a look at the effects on laundry.

Hard water: Although soap is a good cleaning agent, its effectiveness is reduced when used in hard water. Hardness in water is caused by the presence of mineral salts – most commonly calcium (Ca) and magnesium (Mg), but sometimes also iron (Fe) and manganese (Mn). The mineral salts react with soap to form an insoluble precipitate known as soap film or scum.

Soap film does not rinse away easily. It tends to remain behind and produces visible deposits on garments and can make fabrics feel stiff. It also attaches to the insides of bathtubs, sinks and washing machines.

Some soap is used up by reacting with hard-water minerals to form the film. This reduces the amount of soap available for cleaning. Soap molecules are not very versatile and cannot be adapted to today's variety of fibers, washing temperatures and water conditions. It may be necessary to use more than the recommended amount of detergent.

Soft water: Even when clothes are washed in soft water, some hardness minerals are introduced by the soil on clothes. Slightly less than the recommended amount of detergent can be used in soft water but

too much reduction in the detergent “dosage” will result in poor soil removal. In addition, soil may be redeposited on the clothes during the wash cycle. Measuring is the only way to use a detergent both effectively and economically.

Saltwater: There are specifications for products that are intended to work in saltwater but they are designed for limited use in unusual circumstances, such as by the U.S. Navy or the Department of Defense. In general, soaps developed for general consumer use are not formulated for use in saltwater.

Water temperature: Although washing clothes with cold or warm water is more energy-efficient than using hot water, there can be trade-offs when it comes to stain removal and cleaning efficiency. General dinginess or stains that linger can be the result of water temperature that is lower than recommended by the manufacturer. When washing in cold water, be sure to use a detergent that is specially formulated for low water temperatures.

Water conservation: With water and energy conservation on everyone's mind, HE (high-efficiency) washers are becoming more and more popular. They use less water – from 20% to 66% less than traditional agitator washers – and because of reduced water consumption, they use less energy – as much as 20% to 50% less than traditional agitator washers. In order to get optimum cleaning results, it is essential to use a detergent specially formulated to be low-sudsing and quick dispersing – properties necessary for high performance in HE washers.

Clean S.P.O.T. (Supporting Partner Outreach Today)

Poison Prevention Week Council



The United States Congress established National Poison Prevention Week in 1961 (P.L. 87-319). Shortly thereafter, the Poison Prevention Week Council was organized to coordinate this annual event and promote poison prevention.

Now almost 50 years later, the Council continues to use National Poison Prevention Week to highlight the dangers of poisonings and how to prevent them.

Join the Council in preventing poisonings every day and help ensure the safety of children and adults in your home and your community. Take a few minutes to visit the National Poison Prevention Week Council Web site at www.poisonprevention.org and learn about poison prevention. To help raise awareness about poisoning, the Council encourages

Cleaning Matters® readers to follow it at www.twitter.com/PoisonPrevent and join the group on Facebook.

Nancy Bock, Vice President of Education at The Soap and Detergent Association, says there are three things families can do to prevent poisonings in the home: read the label, store products in their original containers and keep all cleaning supplies out of the reach of children. For more dos and don'ts, download and share Clean and Safe in the 21st Century <http://cleaning101.com/health/SafeClean9-18-04.pdf> and Home Safe Home for Your Little Explorer and You www.cleaning101.com/health/HomeSafeHome2006.pdf.

If you or a loved one has been poisoned, call the national toll-free Poison Help line **(1-800-222-1222)** immediately. Help is available 24 hours a day, so keep that number by your phone and help us spread the word that poisonings can be prevented.

Who You Gonna Call?

Where to go when you have cleaning product questions

The family celebration is over . . . and among the leftovers is a terrible food stain in the middle of grandma's antique tablecloth. Or, the label on a special cleaning product got wet and now you don't know how to use it. Or, you've had a product for some time and aren't sure if it's too old to be effective. Or, you want to know the best way to store a product to insure safety and a long shelf life.

When questions like these arise, help is just a phone call or Internet visit away. Manufacturers are increasingly sophisticated about ways to impart useful information to consumers. Contact numbers (usually toll-free) and websites are listed on the product label. If the label has been destroyed for any reason, use a search engine to locate the website. Once there, you'll

find email and phone number contact information. But before you leave the site, take some time to look around. These websites are full of useful information . . . and you may find the answer to your question is already there.

In addition, www.cleaning101.com, the website of The Soap and Detergent Association, is a treasure trove of information, from general cleaning information to help with specific problems, as well as scientific and technical information about cleaning products, sustainability and environmental issues, and the relationship between hygiene and disease. And don't miss clean "Tweets" from The Soap and Detergent Association. Check out news and views on hygiene, health and cleaning at www.twitter.com/cleaning101.

Clean Home . . . Healthy Families Award

Taking the message to the air waves

Gale A. Mills, Family and Consumer Sciences Educator for Oklahoma State University Extension, Dewey, Oklahoma, was honored as one of the 2009 winners of the Clean Homes . . . Healthy Families Award. The award, bestowed annually by the National Extension Association of Family & Consumer Sciences (NEAFCS), honors members for innovative educational programs that utilize any of The Soap and Detergent Association's educational materials to help families and individuals understand the link between clean and safe homes and good health.

Gale took to the airwaves via closed-circuit television to create her award-winning event. Through a program broadcast from the Bartlesville Elementary School Library during Healthy Choices Week, she educated the school's students, teachers and staff about the correlation between good handwashing and good health. Prior to the broadcast, she supplied each teacher with an "It's a Snap!" poster and grade-

appropriate reinforcement activities, all downloaded from SDA's website. The closed-circuit TV program was full of props that helped illustrate many situations when hands should be washed. These included before eating or cooking (graham crackers), after using the restroom (toilet paper), after petting animals (two stuffed dogs), after blowing your nose (box of tissues), and more. It was also scripted so that the children could join in by singing the "Happy Birthday" song to learn how long the optimum 20-second hand wash is.

To help spread the word to the community at large, the local newspaper also ran an article about the event, and educational information was provided for each student to take home to encourage family and friends to practice good hand hygiene.

For more information about the Clean Homes . . . Healthy Families Award, visit www.cleaning101.com/awards/clean-homes-award.cfm. The deadline for applications for the 2010 Award is April 1.

Saying It with Flowers

A bouquet of appreciation on Administrative Professionals Day

Administrative Professionals Day, which was originally created in 1952 as National Secretaries Day, was established to recognize and celebrate the work of secretaries, administrative assistants, and other office professionals for their growing and diverse contributions to the workplace.

Whether you are on the giving or the receiving end of a bouquet, Nancy Bock, Vice President of Education at The Soap and Detergent Association, has some suggestions for making the gesture last longer.

- Be sure that the vase is squeaky clean – inside and out. Bacteria in the vase can shorten the life of the flowers.
- Fill the vase with warm water and, to prolong the life of the flowers, add ½ teaspoon of chlorine bleach.

- Using a sharp knife or shears, trim at least ¼" off each stem. Also remove any leaves that will be below the water line. As each stem is cut and the leaves are removed, place it immediately into the water. This prevents air bubbles from getting into the cut, which prevents or slows down water intake.

Some flowers, particularly lilies, tend to shed pollen during handling. If this happens, resist the urge to brush the pollen off your outfit. Otherwise, you may rub the pollen into the fabric. In addition, the oil from your hands may set the stain. If pollen gets on your clothes, gently shake or vacuum the fabric to remove as much pollen as possible. If there's no vacuum on hand – or if some pollen remains – use the sticky side of a piece of tape to carefully lift off any remaining particles. If the item is washable, pretreat with prewash stain remover and launder in the hottest water that's safe for the fabric. If the stain remains, launder again, using chlorine bleach, if safe for the fabric, or oxygen bleach.

Get Involved!

National Cleaning for a Reason™ Week



The Soap and Detergent Association (SDA) is a proud supporter of the Cleaning for a Reason™ Foundation and its efforts to provide free residential cleaning services

to women who are undergoing treatment for cancer. The Foundation will celebrate National Cleaning for a Reason Week, April 18- 24, 2010, and you can get involved! If you use a residential cleaning service, please encourage them to become a partner. All of the information necessary to become a partner, make a donation or find a Cleaning for a Reason partner in your city is available at www.cleaningforareason.org.

Online Shopping Convenience

New feature on website

The Soap and Detergent Association has made it easier to order publications online! This new feature on the website means that you can order materials online, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and have your shipment arrive directly at your location. Publication topics include hand hygiene, dishwashing, household cleaning and laundry, plus health, safety, environment and sustainability.

You now have easy, instant access to all of SDA's materials! You can search or browse by topic, audience or product name or view the entire list. If you need copies today, links to the online versions are included

in the publication descriptions. Most materials can be downloaded and photocopied as you need.

Online payment is secure and simple; SDA accepts Master Card, Visa or American Express. Many products include a discount for the first unit ordered, and will be automatically credited to your shopping cart. If you have any questions, please call SDA at 202-347-2900 or email education@cleaning101.com, before paying.

Ready to shop? Go to http://mycleaning101.com/cvweb_sda/cgi-bin/memberdll.dll/openpage?wrp=publications.htm. Check back frequently for new educational materials.

Tell Nancy Your Handwashing Stories!**Ask Nancy!/Tell Nancy!**

Remember when you were in school and Show 'n Tell was a favorite classroom activity? Well, that's just what we'd like to do with this section of Cleaning Matters. We'd love to hear more from our readers! Here's an acceptable place to air your dirty laundry . . . to tell others how you coaxed spots and stains from your favorite outfits. Do you have a funny story about what was left in the pockets? What lessons have your kids learned the hard way about 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.

Q: I recently purchased a high-efficiency washer and dryer. Is it true that fabric softener sheets in the dryer would cause buildup on the lint screen and sensor bars, making the dryer work harder which, in turn, would produce extra wear and tear on the motor?

A: Some dryer manufacturers do discourage the use of dryer sheets because chemical buildup can clog the lint filter. Check your dryer manual or contact the manufacturer to be sure. One solution would be to use the dryer sheets sparingly – no more than one per dryer load – and clean the lint filter after every load. The filter should also be occasionally washed in soap and water to remove built-up residue from dryer sheets. Note, too, that not all dryer sheets are the same. You may want to experiment to see which brand causes less buildup. If you are still concerned, an in-the-wash softener may be your best solution.

Q: Do today's bar soaps and non-bleach-type laundry soaps contain any ingredients for killing bacteria? Washing in just hot water is not enough as it needs to be near boiling temperature, correct? So what kills germs and bacteria these days?

A: Detergents are effective at washing away many germs. However, sodium hypochlorite (chlorine) bleach remains the most effective way to sanitize laundry where germs and bacteria are a concern, such as with diapers or when there is illness in the home. Interestingly, in a study conducted at the University of Arizona <http://www.dr laundryblog.com/?p=111>, the insides of 100 washers were swabbed to determine whether they contained residual "bugs." They found that more than 60 percent of the machines tested positive for coliform bacteria, an indicator of fecal contamination. To combat this, it is recommended that, wherever possible, chlorine bleach be used on underwear loads and that the bleach load is done first. If you don't use liquid bleach, then first run an empty wash cycle with liquid bleach and cold water to sanitize the machine. As for water temperature, the hotter the water, the more bacteria will be killed. Your best bet for killing bacteria is to put clothes in the dryer. Machine-drying after washing and rinsing will help reduce lingering bacteria.

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

Clean Ideas

Get the Jump on Spring Stains

Warmer weather presents new laundry challenges

As the weather warms, activities move outdoors. There are garages to clean, fences to paint, gardens to weed and sports to be rediscovered. A whole new group of stains seems to appear!

When these stains come out of hibernation, here's how to send them packing.

- **Bicycle grease:** Pretreat using a prewash stain remover, then launder using the hottest water that's safe for the fabric. If the stain remains, apply a concentrated heavy-duty cleaner (one that's labeled for use on grease stains) directly on the grease spot. Scrub gently, using a small brush or old toothbrush, and then launder again.
- **Grass:** Pretreat using a prewash stain remover. Launder, using the hottest water that's safe for the fabric. If any stain remains, launder again with detergent and chlorine bleach, if safe for the fabric, or oxygen bleach.
- **Mud:** Let the mud dry, then brush off any excess. Pretreat using a prewash stain remover. Launder, using the hottest water that's safe for the fabric. If any stain remains, launder again with detergent and chlorine bleach, if safe for the fabric, or oxygen bleach.
- **Perspiration:** Check to see if the stain has changed the color of the fabric. If so, apply ammonia to fresh stains and white vinegar to old ones. Then, treat with a prewash stain remover or rub the stain with a bar of soap. Launder using the hottest water that's safe for the fabric. If the stain remains, launder again with detergent and oxygen bleach.
- **Rust:** Use a commercial rust remover, which is available in most supermarkets and hardware stores. These products contain toxic acids, so be sure to read and follow the label directions carefully. Never use a product containing bleach on a rust stain, as it will permanently set the stain.
- **Water-based paint:** Scrape off the excess paint. Working from the back of the fabric, flush the stain with warm running water. Mix a solution of one part liquid hand-dishwashing detergent to one part warm water and sponge the solution onto the stain. Using a brush with equal-length bristles, gently pound the stain with an up-and-down motion (called "tamping") to break up the paint residue. Rinse. Repeat sponging, tamping and rinsing the stain until the paint is gone. Launder, using the hottest water that's safe for the fabric.