

Calendar of Clean

November is...

- **Kids Goal Setting Week:** November 7-11. See "Mission: Cleaning"
- **Black Friday:** November 25. Black Friday, the day after Thanksgiving, is traditionally the start of holiday shopping season. See "Avoid Harmful Germs at the Holidays!"

December is...

- **Handwashing Awareness Week:** December 4-10. See "Avoid Harmful Germs at the Holidays!"

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Laundry Detergents

A Brighter Holiday

Household cleaning tips for the whole family

At holiday time, we all dream of a hearth and home that's sparkling clean and guest-ready, 24/7. Before the real world of shopping and socializing intervenes, check out some of these plan-ahead strategies from The Soap and Detergent Association.

Coat Closet Cleanout

Make room for guests' gear. Remove out-of-season items. Launder or dry clean items and put them away. Sort through boots and shoes; store them in bins or hanging organizers. Add hooks for hats and scarves. Restock with hangers sturdy enough for winter coats.

Window Wonderland

Give the world a clear view of your lovely outdoor decorations by cleaning windows! New varieties of glass cleaners offer a range of fragrances, including berry, orange and lemon, to spice up your holiday cleaning.

Green and Clean

Houseplants deserve a holiday spruce-up. Wipe down broadleaf plants with a damp paper towel. For plants with smaller leaves, mist with a spray bottle filled with room temperature water.

Road Rules

Protect your lawns and garden beds with driveway markers to keep snowplows, snowblowers and cars from straying into unwanted places.

Quick Fixes

For hassle-free cleaning once the holidays are in full swing, keep these items close at hand:

- **Electrostatic dust cloths** for spot dusting tabletops, TV screens, framed photos and knick knacks.
- **Toilet brushes with biodegradable pads** are particularly handy when more guests mean more traffic in the bathroom. Just brush, then flush the pad away.
- **Disinfectant wipes** at sink side in kitchens and bathrooms for quick clean up, and for disinfecting commonly touched, surfaces such as doorknobs and telephones.
- **Window wipes** to make smudges on windows and mirrors disappear in a wink. Besides on glass, most are also safe to use on chrome, stainless steel, plastic and vinyl surfaces.

News Flash

Bacteria in Dust Trigger Asthma Symptoms

New research shows dust bacteria can trigger asthma and asthma-related symptoms

New research is helping scientists to better understand the relationship between house dust and asthma, reports The Soap and Detergent Association. Studies supported by the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS) show that bacteria lurking in household dust produce chemicals that may trigger asthma and asthma-related symptoms such as wheezing.

These chemicals, called endotoxins, exist in the cell walls of bacteria. When bacteria rupture or disintegrate, the endotoxins that are released can cause inflammation of the airways.

Asthma Patrol

The studies found that households with higher endotoxin concentrations experienced higher prevalence of respiratory symptoms. Although dust samples from kitchen and living room floors had higher levels of endotoxins than those collected from bedrooms, researchers found that the health impact was greater in the bedroom where factors such as duration and timing of the exposure come into play.

Dust Control

Understanding the impact of household endotoxins on human health and knowing what triggers asthma will lead to new insight into how to prevent and treat asthma. By controlling the amount of dust in the bedroom, you can help reduce the impact of this serious asthma trigger. Here are some tips:

- Wash sheets weekly; wash blankets, mattress pads, bedspreads and comforters at least monthly.
- Use special dust mite-proof covers, sometimes called "allergy impermeable" covers, to help keep dust from going through pillows and mattresses. Wipe covers with a damp cloth every week. If you don't use covers, wash pillows at least four times a year, and replace them every year.
- Use smooth blinds or washable curtains. Wipe blinds weekly with a clean, damp cloth. Wash curtains monthly.
- Don't use carpet in the bedroom. Use linoleum, vinyl or wood flooring and washable area rugs. Wash rugs once a week.
- Dust furniture weekly, using a dusting product or a special cloth that attracts dust (a dry cloth just spreads dust around).
- Vacuum and wet mop floors weekly.

Web Resource: Check out the SDA's educational materials on Cleaning to Control Allergies and Asthma at www.cleaning101.com/asthma.

Decked Out for Holiday Portraits

Cleaning fine washables for picture perfect portraits

Holiday portraits, with family members dressed in their best, are cherished momentos. Whether it's a once-in-lifetime event or a yearly tradition for your family, looking good is the goal.

Portrait-worthy Fabrics

Clothes that are clean and sparkling are the perfect complement to those smiling faces. To make sure your garments are portrait worthy, The Soap and Detergent Association urges gentle care for fine fabrics:

- Read and follow the instructions on the garment care labels.
- For most delicates, a cold water wash is recommended. Always rinse in cold water.
- If this is the first time the item is washed, check to make sure it is colorfast. Dip a cotton swab into a detergent solution and apply to an inconspicuous spot on the garment, such as a seam allowance. Let it dry and then compare the color to an untreated part of the garment. If the color has changed, the garment should be dry cleaned.

Tips for Machine Washing

- Use the gentle cycle.
- Consider using a laundry detergent formulated for delicate fabrics.
- Check the detergent label for the proper amount to use. Generally, it's a full scoop of powder detergent or a full cap of liquid detergent per every two gallons of water.
- Some fine washables have trims that need special protection. If that's the case, launder the garment in a net lingerie bag.
- Let the detergent and the water agitate for a minute or two so any powder is fully dissolved and the detergent is evenly dispersed. Then add the clothes.
- Dry in the dryer or dry flat, as instructed by the care label.

Tips for Hand Washing

- Check the detergent label for the proper amount to use.
- When hand washing silk fabric, do not rub. The friction can cause color loss.
- After rinsing, roll the garment in a dry towel to remove excess moisture.
- Dry flat, away from direct sunlight.

Avoid Harmful Germs at the Holidays!

Chase germs away during the holiday rush

As the holiday shopping frenzy escalates, the germs that cause colds and flu want to get in on the action, too. They're lurking in the crowd, just looking for opportunities to catch you off guard, warns The Soap and Detergent Association. What's one of the best ways to stay healthy for the holidays? Wash your hands frequently.

Opportunity #1: Rest Stop

Washing your hands after using the restroom is essential for good hygiene.

Opportunity #2: Snack Shop

Busy shoppers need frequent refueling. But germs from hands that have touched merchandise, door handles, credit cards and more can find their way into your favorite snack. Make clean hands your first order of business.

Opportunity #3: Dinner-on-the-run

With so much to do, dinner may be no more than a quick pizza before heading out to the mall. No matter how pressed you are for time, wash your hands before you eat and again before you rush out the door.

Opportunity #4: After Coughing and Sneezing

One of the most common ways people catch colds is by rubbing their nose or eyes after touching someone or something contaminated with the cold virus. Don't be an enabler who spreads germs to others. Cough into your shoulder, not your hands, and always wash your hands after coughing or sneezing.

When soap and water aren't available, or when public restrooms are inadequately stocked, antibacterial or alcohol-based wipes and hand gel formulas are effective for killing germs. Stash them in your purse, your shopping tote or the glove compartment of your car so there's no excuse to be caught dirty-handed.

The Perfect Sweater

How to keep your favorite sweaters in tip-top shape

Baby, it's cold outside! So grab a sweater and let's go! What's that you say? Your favorite sweater is looking a little tired, and the season's just begun?

Well, say goodbye to losing a favorite sweater before its prime with these tips from The Soap and Detergent Association:

Shop Talk

When choosing a sweater, price is just one consideration.

- **Construction.** Harder, tighter yarns are more durable than soft, loose ones, which tend to stretch easily. That's why a fisherman's sweater is more suited to rugged, outdoor activity and a cashmere sweater is happier in the office.
- **Care requirements.** Sweaters can be machine-washable, hand wash-only or dry clean-only. Read the care label before you buy so there are no surprises later on! Choose care styles that match your lifestyle.
- **Trim.** Special trims, such as suede, leather or beads may influence the care requirements. Check the store's return policy before purchasing in case the trim creates maintenance problems.

Cleaning

Read and follow the care label instructions:

- **Machine washing.** When in doubt about water temperature, choose a cold water wash. Use a detergent formulated for delicates.
- **Hand washing.** Gently swish the sweater around in the wash. Do not rub or wring. Rinse thoroughly, then roll the sweater in a towel and press gently to remove excess moisture. Some washers, though, do have hand wash cycles.
- **Drying.** Hand wash-only sweaters should be dried flat. Machine-washable sweaters can sometimes be dried in the dryer on low heat. Check the care label to be sure.
- **Blocking.** Soft, hand wash-only sweaters may lose their shape during washing. To restore them, trace the outline of the sweater onto a piece of brown or craft paper before cleaning. Use it as a pattern to block the sweater to its original size and shape.
- **Dry cleaning.** In-dryer cleaning kits can be used to remove odors and light soil. For stains and heavy soil, take dry clean-only sweaters to a professional drycleaner.

Daily Care

Sweaters should be folded for storage. Hanging a sweater can stretch it out of shape. And be careful what jewelry you wear with your sweater. Some knits are delicate and easily snagged.

Holiday Party Disasters - Solved!

Easy remedies free you to focus on the fun

Holiday entertaining is fraught with potential disasters. But a cool head and the right products will keep a mini-crisis from becoming a major problem. Here are some quick and easy remedies from The Soap and Detergent Association:

Disaster: Gravy on your new tablecloth.

Solution: If you can get to the stain while it's still wet, treat it with a stain removal wipe. Otherwise, pretreat it after dinner with a prewash stain remover. Launder in the hottest water that's safe for the fabric.

Disaster: Lots of guests leave the bathroom smelling less than fresh.

Solution: Take a multi task approach: toilet bowl cleaners in tablet or gel form for quick cleaning and fabric refreshers for bathroom window treatments.

Disaster: A mid-party spot on your favorite outfit.

Solution: If the garment is washable, as soon as the party's over, treat the spot with a stain removal stick. This puts the stain "on hold" and buys you up to a week until you can tackle the laundry. If the garment is dry-clean-only, take it to the drycleaner as soon as possible and let them know the cause of the stain.

Disaster: Germs just love to mingle at a party, spreading illness wherever they can.

Solution: Use disinfectant wipes to quick-clean countertops and food preparation surfaces. Keep them next to bathroom and kitchen sinks for easy use. Be sure there is soap at every sink. Replace cloth hand towels with pretty paper ones so germs get tossed in the wastebasket. And put hand wipes right next to the tissue box!

Disaster: Cigarette smoke and cooking odors linger long after the guests have left.

Solution: Open up the windows and let the fresh air in. Then spray fabric refresher on window treatments, upholstery, rugs and carpets.

Disaster: Red wine spilled on your sofa.

Solution: Gently blot up any liquid. Don't scrub or rub the spot. As soon as possible after the party, use an upholstery cleaner on the spot. Read and follow the directions before using.

Mission: Cleaning

Help kids set cleaning goals

Learning how to set goals is one of life's most important skills. To help nurture this skill in children, November 7-11 is Kids Goal Setting Week.

Since a clean room is a common bone of contention between parents and children, what better place to practice goal setting, asks The Soap and Detergent Association.

Depending on the age of the child, "keeping your room clean" may be too big a goal. But, by breaking it down into age-appropriate tasks, there are many opportunities for success.

- Even very young children can learn to put toys and games away before going to bed.
- Install hooks at child-friendly heights so clothes can come up off the floor.
- Use brightly colored bins to hold different types of clothing.
- See-through plastic shoe racks on the door can hold toys and stuffed animals as well.
- A child who isn't old enough to do laundry might be able to strip the bed and put the sheets in the laundry basket.
- Have your child help you dust the furniture. Allow him or her to use an electrostatic dustsheet or mitt to clean bedroom furniture.
- Ask your child to separate his/her dirty clothes into whites and colors.

Highlights

Educators receive SDA "Clean Homes, Healthy Families Award," "It's A SNAP" program earns CDC Award

The Soap and Detergent Association recognized two educators for innovative, educational programs that link clean homes with good health for the third year in a row at the recent National Extension Association of Family and

Consumer Sciences (NEAFCS) Convention in Philadelphia. The "Clean Homes, Healthy Families Award" was presented to Carrie Schneider Miller and Johanna Hicks during a banquet that gathered more than 900 educators from across the country.



SDA's Nancy Bock (center) presented the 2005 "Clean Homes, Healthy Families Award" to Carrie Schneider Miller (left) and Johanna Hicks at the NEAFCS Convention.

In addition, the "Healthy Schools, Healthy People, It's a SNAP" program has received the 2005 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Horizon Health Education Award. The award recognizes outstanding health education programs that have been in existence for 2-4 years.

The program was recently honored during the 7th Annual Health Education Day awards luncheon at CDC. The awards program theme for the day was "Valuing Connections: A Health Education Principal," which truly exemplifies the foundation of the SNAP program.

The "Healthy Schools, Healthy People, It's a SNAP" program is a joint effort of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Department of Health and Human Services and The Soap and Detergent Association. The program raises awareness of the importance of good hand hygiene and encourages middle school communities to improve health. For more information go to www.itsasnap.org.

Cleaning Questions? Ask Nancy!

Q: I spilled cranberry sauce on my white blouse at Thanksgiving dinner. How do I get the stain out?

A: Stains can be tricky especially when they're on delicate fabrics. First, read the care instructions on your blouse label. Then, use a prewash soil and stain remover, following the label's directions. Wash as instructed on the care label. Remember, silk and other delicate fabrics may require special handling. If you need to dry-clean your blouse, let your dry cleaner know about the stain and what caused it.

Q: I'm thinking of purchasing a High Efficiency washer. How much energy and water will I really save?

A: High Efficiency (HE) washers use significantly less water and energy than traditional washing machines. Depending on the age and model of your current washing machine, an HE washer can use from 20% to 66% less water and save 20% to 50% in water-heating energy. Over time, these figures add up to significant savings of both resources and money!

Q: I've read about prewash and in-wash stain removers. What's the difference between the two?

A: Prewash stain removers are used to pretreat heavily soiled or stained areas before they go into the washing machine. Prewash products can be particularly effective on oil-based stains on polyester fibers. Available in a variety of mediums - from pump-sprays to liquids, sticks to aerosol sprays - they are designed to penetrate fibers and break up stains both on contact and in the washing machine.

In-wash stain removers, such as bleaches, attack stains on soiled materials as part of the wash cycle in the washing machine. In-wash stain removers can be particularly effective in soaking cycles before the washer starts its agitation cycle.

While both methods can be effective, take time to read the care instructions on your garment as well as the directions on the cleaning product to be sure you're choosing the right product for the job.

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



Clean Ideas: Got Guests?

Tips for keeping kitchen and bath clean during guest season

Extra bathroom and kitchen traffic means extra work to keep surfaces and appliances clean and smelling fresh. Here are some tips to make your kitchen and bathroom welcoming during the holidays.

Kitchen:

1. Keep disinfectant wipes or sprays handy to quickly clean countertops, cutting boards, the microwave and the stovetop.
2. Keep handwashing soap at the kitchen sink.
3. Either replace cloth hand towels regularly or stock up on paper towels.
4. Give the kitchen a quick sweep as a final clean-up step after each meal.
5. Keep the sink clear by scrubbing pots as you go rather than facing a sink full of dishes after you eat.

Bathroom:

1. Rinse the tub after each use to keep soap film and hard water deposits from forming. Mist surfaces with a spray cleaner right after use while the walls are wet and warm and you can skip rinsing, wiping and scrubbing.
2. Leave shower curtains/doors open after showers to let the tub and surfaces air-dry and help prevent mildew.
3. Use toilet bowl cleaners in tablet or gel form to keep your toilet bowl clean.
4. Spray window treatments with fabric refreshers to help keep them looking and smelling fresh.