



# CleaningMatters

Tips and Trends from the American Cleaning Institute®

January/February 2012

## Features

- **Support Sustainability**  
*Good Practices for a Better Earth*
- **National Poison Prevention Week**  
*Plan now to be part of this important event*
- **Two Sources of Cleaning-Product News & Updates**  
*Cleaning Matters & ACI SmartBrief*
- **Computer Cleanup**  
*Tips for cleaning your keyboard, mouse and monitor*
- **Clean Hands for Valentine's Day**  
*Spread Love, Not Germs*
- **ACI Central**  
*Your Source for Science-Based, Nonbranded Information*
- **Ask Nancy!/Tell Nancy!**
- **Clean Ideas: Countdown to Touchdown**  
*Ten Tips for a Creating a Healthy, Happy Super Bowl Party*

## Calendar of Clean

### January is ...

- Get Organized Month
- National Clean Off Your Desk Day: Jan. 9  
*(see Computer Cleanup)*
- National Pie Day: Jan. 23  
*(see Ask Nancy!/Tell Nancy!: Removing Pie Stains)*

### February is ...

- National Wear Red Day: Feb. 3
- Super Bowl Sunday: Feb. 5  
*(see Clean Ideas: Countdown to Touchdown)*
- Valentine's Day: Feb. 14  
*(see Clean Hands for Valentine's Day and Ask Nancy!/Tell Nancy!: Cleaning up after Valentine's Day Crafts)*

## Support Sustainability

### *Good Practices for a Better Earth*

In simple terms, sustainability means the ability to improve the quality of life for this and future generations by creating products that promote hygiene and cleanliness, and are environmentally sound and economically successful. It also means using those products in a responsible and ecologically sound manner.

Every one of us can be a part of the sustainability movement by instituting some very easy-to-follow practices. When it comes to cleaning products, the choices we make, the way we use them and how we dispose of them has a big impact on the environment, explains Nancy Bock, Senior Vice President of Consumer Education at the American Cleaning Institute®.

- Read the product labels carefully and choose the product that's best for the job.
- Choosing concentrated products is a smart sustainable choice. Besides needing fewer resources to make the product, concentrates reduce the use of packaging materials. And smaller boxes and bottles save energy in shipping.
- Consider refill systems that have been developed for several types of cleaning products. Refill containers use less packaging material than primary containers. Refills also usually don't require convenience features like trigger sprayers or measuring caps, reducing packaging even more.
- Don't purchase more product than you will realistically use.
- Use the product up. If you can't do that, give it to someone who can. Just be sure the label is intact so that they will know how to use and dispose of the product safely.



american cleaning institute®  
for better living



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## Support Sustainability (cont.)

### *Good Practices for a Better Earth*

Good sustainable practices also include proper disposal techniques. Follow label directions, if provided. If there are no directions:

- Think about how you use the product. If it mixes with water, it's water-soluble. Most liquid, gel and powder water-soluble household cleaning products can be disposed of down the drain with running water – just like when you use them.
- Most solid products (soap scouring pads, sticks, towelettes, etc.) can be placed in the trash. For other products (such as oven cleaners, crystal drain openers and furniture polishes), call the manufacturer's toll-free number (or visit their website) for disposal recommendations, or check with your local waste disposal facility.
- Don't reuse containers for any other purposes.

Once the container is empty, be sure to dispose of it properly. Check with your community's recycling center to see what type of plastic, paperboard and metal containers they accept. Refer to local guidelines for recycling plastics, paperboard and aerosol cans (steel and/or aluminum). In many communities, items like aerosol cans and containers that contain disinfectants, drain cleaners, etc. are part of special hazardous waste collection events.

To locate your nearest recycling centers for cleaning product containers, as well as other items such as paint, batteries, electronics and hazardous waste, visit [www.earth911.com](http://www.earth911.com).

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## National Poison Prevention Week

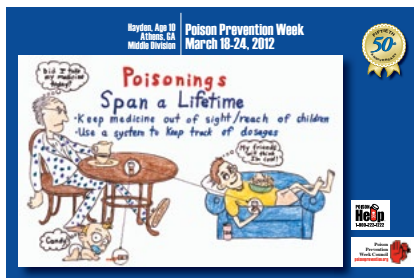
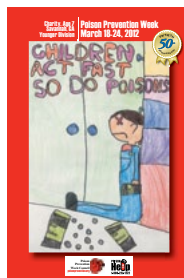
### *Plan now to be part of this important event*

In 1962, *West Side Story* won the Oscar® for Best Picture, John Glenn was the first American to orbit the earth, the Rolling Stones made their singing debut in London, Johnny Carson took over as permanent host of *The Tonight Show* and the Beatles released "Love Me Do," their first single for EMI.

It was also the year that Congress passed a law to authorize the President to designate annually the third week in March as National Poison Prevention Week. President John F. Kennedy signed this act into law, after which the Poison Prevention Week Council, whose membership includes the American Cleaning Institute®, was formed to coordinate this annual event. So, this year marks the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of National Poison Prevention Week.

To engage the community in helping to ensure the safety of children and adults, the Poison Prevention Week Council conducts an annual nationwide poster contest. The winning posters, created by children in grades K-8, are made available free of charge, for up to 25 copies of each poster. The posters are an eye-catching and charming way to convey a very serious message about the dangers of unintentional poisoning. They're great for schools, offices, hospitals, nursing homes, healthcare institutions and more. Orders are filled on a first come/first served basis. Visit [www.poisonprevention.org](http://www.poisonprevention.org) now so you'll have posters in plenty of time to help promote this important endeavor.

You can share your plans for promoting Poison Prevention Week in your school or community on the Poison Prevention Week [Facebook page](#).



 NewsFlash

## Two Sources of Cleaning-Product News & Updates: *Cleaning Matters & ACI SmartBrief*

*Cleaning Matters*<sup>®</sup>, the American Cleaning Institute's bimonthly consumer newsletter, has a long history of sharing tips and trends about cleaning products with the public. Each issue shares information that you can use when cleaning your homes, hands, clothes, dishes and surfaces. And, we include seasonal topics, helpful hints and information from the experts. There's even a section for you to ask questions and tell your stories. If you have story ideas or questions about *Cleaning Matters*, please contact Nancy Bock at [nbock@cleaninginstitute.org](mailto:nbock@cleaninginstitute.org).

Recently, ACI teamed with news aggregator SmartBrief to bring free weekly updates with our new ACI SmartBrief.

ACI SmartBrief shares a weekly summary of news, research, technology and trends in the cleaning product industry. This concise news feed gives you insights on what's happening throughout the cleaning product supply chain, as well as updates on ACI outreach, advocacy, research and sustainability initiatives. News stories are selected with cleaning product industry executives in mind, but anyone can [subscribe](#).

If you no longer want to receive this additional newsletter, you can unsubscribe to the ACI SmartBrief by simply clicking the [Unsubscribe](#) link at the bottom of the next email. If you have any questions about ACI SmartBrief, please contact Brian Sansoni at [bsansoni@cleaninginstitute.org](mailto:bsansoni@cleaninginstitute.org).



## Computer Cleanup

### *Tips for cleaning your keyboard, mouse and monitor*

If your computer keyboard no longer offers the same snappy performance it did when it was new ... or if your mouse pointer moves sporadically or tends to stick in one position ... or if the mouse itself is a little tacky to the touch, take it as a sign that some cleaning is in order.

Gunk, grime and germs are the natural by-products of computer use. Nancy Bock, Senior Vice President, Consumer Education at the American Cleaning Institute® has some tips for giving these gremlins a clean sweep. Before you begin, check the owner's manual for any cleaning instructions specific to your keyboard, mouse or monitor.

No matter what type of equipment you have to clean, the first step is to shut down your computer and unplug from the power source.

#### Cleaning the Keyboard

- With your computer turned off and unplugged, disconnect the keyboard.
- Use compressed gas to clean between the keys. Hold the container so you are spraying at an angle – this will dislodge dust and grime more efficiently.
- Turn the keyboard over and shake it gently to dislodge crumbs and loose dust. It's best to do this over a trash can.
- Repeat spraying and gently shaking until there's no more particle fallout.
- Spray a small amount of all-purpose cleaner on a soft, clean rag and wipe the keyboard, including the chassis and the keys.

Be sure the keyboard is completely dry before reconnecting it to the computer.

#### Cleaning the Computer Mouse

Most of us use our computers every day, so we're constantly handling that mouse, which means that its surface is a breeding ground for all sorts of germs. A good habit, particularly in cold and flu season, is to give the mouse's surface a daily cleaning. Turn off the computer, then disconnect the mouse and spray a bit of antibacterial cleaner on a soft cloth or use an antibacterial wipe and gently clean the surface of the mouse. If you turn off your home or work computer overnight, make it a habit to clean the mouse before powering up in the morning.

Debris on the underside of the mouse can affect its performance. How you clean the mouse depends on whether you have an optical mouse or a ball mouse. An optical mouse utilizes a beam of light to track movement, while a ball (or mechanical) mouse has rollers inside, each set at a different angle to its counterparts. As the rollers are turned, signals are sent to the computer. Although an optical mouse usually requires less maintenance than a ball mouse, both need an occasional cleaning.

No matter which type of mouse you have, shut off and unplug the computer, then disconnect the mouse.

#### For an optical mouse:

- Dampen a cotton swab with rubbing alcohol, use your fingertips to remove any excess moisture from the bud, and then gently clean the area where the LED and the lens are located. Be very careful not to put any pressure on the LED or lens, and also, ensure that **no** excess fluid gets squeezed out of the cotton swab into the mouse.
- Using a dry cotton swab, gently wipe over the area to make sure it's dry.
- Turn the mouse right side up and let it continue to dry for a few minutes before plugging it back in.

#### For a ball mouse:

- Cleaning the tracking area requires some disassembling. Following the manufacturer's instructions, release the removable cover on the bottom of the mouse and take out the ball.
- Using a soft cloth or a microfiber cleaning cloth, clean the ball, removing all dust, hair and other debris. If necessary, dampen the cloth with water.
- Now take a look at the rollers inside the mouse. Carefully remove any lint and debris with tweezers. If necessary, use a few shots of compressed gas to remove stubborn lint from the inside of the mouse. Be sure to keep the can upright so you don't spray moisture into your mouse.
- Next, put a drop of rubbing alcohol on a cotton swab, squeeze the swab with your fingertips to remove excess moisture, and gently clean the rollers and the inside compartment.
- Let the mouse air-dry thoroughly before reassembling it and reconnecting it to your computer.

#### Cleaning the Mouse Pad

What's the point of cleaning the mouse if it's still picking up debris from a dirty mouse pad? Gently clean the pad, using a cloth dampened with an antibacterial spray cleaner. Let it dry thoroughly before setting the mouse back down on the pad.

#### Cleaning the Monitor

How you clean your laptop or desktop monitor depends on what type of screen you have.

- Check the manufacturer recommendations. Note that alcohol- or ammonia-based cleaners can damage antiglare coatings.
- For a glass screen, spray glass cleaner onto a soft cloth rather than directly onto the monitor to help prevent fluid leaking into the electrical components inside the monitor. Rub gently.
- For an LCD screen, rub gently, using a dry microfiber cloth or a soft cotton cloth. If the dry cloth doesn't completely clean the screen, dampen the cloth with plain water.



## Clean Hands for Valentine's Day

### *Spread Love, Not Germs*

Valentine's Day conjures up images of candy and cards. But the American Cleaning Institute® (ACI) would like to add a third "C" to the celebratory mix – clean hands!

What kid doesn't love to exchange cards, grab a cupcake and guzzle some candy on this holiday? But while all these treats are being exchanged, cold and flu germs are lying in wait to crash their party by hitching a free ride on dirty hands.

To help spread the message about the importance of handwashing Valentine's Day style, ACI has created an easy way to start the conversation with young children. A free coloring sheet can be downloaded from [ACI's website](#). Reproduce the sheet and use it to spread

the message at home and at school. Pediatric clinics and dental offices might even want to join in the fun by creating a gallery wall with patient contributions. What better setting for reinforcing the importance of handwashing!

And ACI is creating a virtual gallery. Scan your child's finished coloring sheet, email it to [nbock@cleaninginstitute.org](mailto:nbock@cleaninginstitute.org) and we will post it on ACI's website.

Additional handwashing education resources are available at [www.cleaninginstitute.org/cleanhands/](http://www.cleaninginstitute.org/cleanhands/).

Educate others about good hygiene during cold and flu season!

Share our FREE posters and brochures. Click [here](#) to download, print and share our hygiene messages.

Click [here](#) if you would like to receive our free Cold and Flu Toolkit.

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## ACI Central

### *Your Source for Science-Based, Nonbranded Information*

In this Information Age, there are so many places to get that information – some reliable, some not so much. Fortunately, the American Cleaning Institute® (ACI) is your source for science-based, nonbranded information about all things cleaning. From sustainability issues to cleaning product ingredients, from cleaning techniques to safety issues like preventing foodborne illnesses and poison protection, ACI puts a wealth of information at your fingertips that is both free and accurate. Go to [www.cleaninginstitute.org](http://www.cleaninginstitute.org) and click on the Clean Living section.

Information exchange is a two-way street. With that in mind, ACI encourages readers to share, post and educate each other through our many portals.

- Become a fan of ACI on [Facebook.com/AmericanCleaningInstitute](https://www.facebook.com/AmericanCleaningInstitute) and share your comments about ACI awards programs, Calendar of Clean events and ACI initiatives.
- Find us at [Twitter.com/cleaninstitute](https://twitter.com/cleaninstitute) and share articles, links and comments on cleaning products and practices, news and industry events.
- Join ACI on [LinkedIn](https://www.linkedin.com/company/cleaninginstitute), where you can network with staff, members, partners and NGO contacts, as well as participate in the discussions about chemical management, sustainability and other topics of interest to the cleaning product industry.
- Subscribe to [SchoolTube.com/user/AmericanCleaningInstitute](https://www.schooltube.com/user/AmericanCleaningInstitute) and view ACI videos on hygiene education. Be sure to view our favorite videos from students and teachers across the country.



## Ask Nancy

## Tell Nancy



We'd love to hear more from our readers! Ask Nancy for guidance on [cleaning surfaces](#), [dirty dishes](#), [laundry](#) and [hands](#). Or tell Nancy how you solved your cleaning crises or dirty dilemmas. Share your questions or story on our [Facebook](#) wall, direct message us on [Twitter](#), or send an email to [nbock@cleaninginstitute.org](mailto:nbock@cleaninginstitute.org).

**Q: My kids are into making Valentine's Day cards and decorations. It's fun, but it creates a mess – especially the markers and the craft glue! How do I get these stains out of their clothing?**

**A:** For regular felt-tip markers (those that aren't labeled "permanent"), rinse the stain with cold water until no more color is being removed. Then place the stain face down on some clean paper towels and sponge with rubbing alcohol. Apply the alcohol first to the clean area around the stain and then directly to the stain. Replace the paper towels as often as needed. Launder using the hottest water that's safe for the fabric.

When it comes to washability, not all markers are alike. In addition to permanent markers with ink that doesn't come out, no matter what you do, there are water-based markers that use water-soluble inks. They are generally nontoxic, but not necessarily washable. When purchasing markers for children's use, read the marker package instructions carefully so you are sure to select ones that specifically feature washability.

To remove water-based craft glue, scrape off the excess glue. If the glue has hardened, you may need to soften it before you scrape it off. Fold some paper towels into a 1/8"-thick stack. Saturate with warm water and then place the stack on top of the glue stain. Leave the paper towels in place for about an hour until the glue softens.

Once you've scraped off the glue, pretreat the stain with a prewash stain remover and launder, using the hottest water that's safe for the fabric.

**Q: Pie is always a favorite dessert in our house. So when we found out that January 23rd is National Pie Day, we thought it was a great excuse for a dessert party! We'd like to make it a fun evening, maybe with checked tablecloths and napkins. But we realize that inviting a bunch of people over to eat pie is also an invitation to stains. How do we get rid of them (the stains, not the guests!)?**

**A:** Blueberry, cherry, boysenberry, strawberry, apple, rhubarb ... no matter what your pie pleasure ... and whether it's baking them or eating them ... stains are bound to happen.

If the stain is fresh, flush it with cool water to remove some of the residue. Then, whether the stain is fresh or has set for a bit, follow these easy steps. 1) Mix one tablespoon of pretreater and ½ teaspoon of liquid laundry or dish detergent with one quart of cool water. Soak the item in this solution for 15–30 minutes. Rinse thoroughly with cool water. 2) If the stain remains, sponge it with rubbing alcohol and then rinse thoroughly. 3) If the stain still remains, soak for 30 minutes in a solution of one quart of warm water and one tablespoon of an enzyme presoak product. Launder, using warm water, your favorite laundry detergent, and chlorine or oxygen bleach if safe for the fabric.

*Nancy Bock is Senior Vice President of Consumer Education at the American Cleaning Institute®*



## Clean Ideas ..... Countdown to Touchdown

### Ten Tips for a Creating a Healthy, Happy Super Bowl Party

Just when you thought you were done with holiday entertaining, along comes Super Bowl Sunday! While watching the game is more fun with a crowd, the good host takes some defensive action to keep the cold and flu germs and the bacteria that causes foodborne illnesses from scoring any points with your guests. Here are some tips to make it a winning day.



1. Kick off with clean hands. They are the first line of defense in safe food preparation. To do the job properly, wet hands with running water. Then apply soap. Rub hands together vigorously to make lather and scrub all surfaces. Continue for 20 seconds. Rinse well under running water. Dry hands thoroughly. Do this before and after handling food.
2. Separate the teams. Think of raw meat, poultry, seafood and eggs as one team and everything else as the opposing team. During food preparation, keep them separate on all the playing fields – in the shopping cart, grocery bags, refrigerator and preparation surfaces.
3. Keep the playing field clean. Make sure food preparation surfaces and utensils are clean. Consider using a dish soap with antibacterial ingredients designed to kill germs on surfaces (check the product label to be sure).
4. Intercept germs and bacteria by disinfecting/sanitizing food preparation surfaces. After your cutting board is used for uncooked meat, fish or poultry, scrub it clean and then sanitize it with a solution of one tablespoon of liquid chlorine bleach per gallon of water. Wet the surface with this solution and allow it to stand for several minutes. Rinse with clear water and air-dry or pat dry with clean paper towels. Use a kitchen surface disinfectant to keep countertops clean and bacteria-free.
5. Run interference on germs with plenty of hand sanitizers and disinfectant wipes. Leave a container of disinfectant wipes for surfaces next to the sink in the powder room. Guests may not use them but you can pop in occasionally and give the sink or countertop a wipe-down. Put hand wipes and sanitizer in strategic places in the TV-viewing room so there are clean hands at snack time. Be sure there is a convenient place to discard the used wipes.
6. Avoid holding penalties by eliminating bowls of food where everyone reaches in. Serve popcorn, chips and similar snacks in individual, oversized paper cups so there's no communal bowl where germs can be shared. For refilling, be sure to use a serving spoon or utensil.
7. Sack the stains. Keep on-the-go stain remover, such as a stain stick or stain wipe, close at hand so both you and the guests can treat stains as they happen.
8. Keep your eye on the goal. An important way to avoid foodborne illnesses is to keep food out of the "danger zone," which means it shouldn't stand out in temperatures between 40°F and 140°F, where bacteria multiply rapidly. Never leave perishable foods, such as meat, poultry, eggs and casseroles (think chicken wings, deviled eggs, meatballs, chili and more) in the danger zone for more than two hours. Even with the two-hour limit, it's best to keep hot foods hot by using a heat source, such as a warming tray, slow cooker or chafing dish.
9. Bring out your best team players. Coasters and napkins, wastebaskets, receptacles designated for recyclables, and plenty of plates, cups and utensils will help keep post-party cleanup to a minimum.
10. Post-game wrap-up. Take a few minutes after the party to sweep the room of food and other debris. Discard any perishable food, including cheese and dips that have exceeded the two-hour rule. Check for spills and stains. If possible, treat them promptly, as fresh stains are easier to remove than ones that have set for a bit. If the room has a stale or smoky odor, treat the textiles to generous application of fabric refresher.

