

# CLEANLINESS FACTS

TIPS AND TRENDS FROM THE SOAP AND DETERGENT ASSOCIATION

475 Park Avenue South New York, New York 10016

## DETERGENTS AND LAUNDRY ADDITIVES IN NEW HIGH-EFFICIENCY WASHERS

As the world population continues to grow, conservation of natural resources becomes an increasingly important activity for all of us. Our individual use of water and energy resources is significantly affected by the types of appliances we purchase for our homes and the ways in which we use them.

Now, innovations in home clothes washers are bringing increased water and energy saving opportunities to American consumers. These machines, known as high-efficiency tumbler washers, use substantially less water than conventional agitator washers. Since heating the water accounts for about 80% to 90% of the energy used for laundering, this reduced water usage will result in significant energy savings.

Currently, two U.S. appliance companies and several European manufacturers offer high-efficiency models in the U.S. Other U.S. manufacturers have announced plans to begin marketing high-efficiency washers in the near future.

Tumblers, whether European or U.S.-made, are usually front loading, but some designs load from the top. Tumblers do not have an agitator. Instead, a tumbling motion, much like that in a clothes dryer, tosses the laundry in and out of a shallow pool of water; clothes may not be totally submerged. Mechanical action is provided by the rotation of the drum. In most tumbler washers, the rotation direction alternates to reduce tangling.

In general, tumble action is gentler on fabrics than agitator action. However, as the tumble action lifts clothes and drops them back into the water, the load continually "breaks" the water surface and traps air into the detergent solution. Because of this action, high to excessive levels of suds can be generated with current U.S. detergents. Excessive

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suds can overflow the machine or interfere with the washer's proper operation. To prevent excessive sudsing when using current U.S. detergents in a tumbler washer, it is often necessary to use substantially less detergent. However, using less detergent than is needed for the load size and soil content can result in inferior cleaning. A detergent specifically formulated for the tumble action would provide the best cleaning performance. (continued on page 2)



Typically, wash water use in high-efficiency washers ranges from 4 to 8 gallons, and self-adjusts according to the load size and the fabrics' absorbency. Usually, 3 (sometimes 2 or 4) cold rinses of 4 to 8 gallons each are used. Total water usage per cycle can range from 15 to 32 gallons — about 1/3 to 2/3 that used by agitator washers.

As with agitator washers, water temperature is controlled by the water heater setting, machine design and water temperature cycle selected by the consumer. Most of the energy consumed by the laundry process goes for heating water. With much less water being heated, energy consumption in a high-efficiency tumbler washer can be 1/3 to 1/2 that used by an agitator washer.

European tumbler washers have longer wash times than conventional U.S. agitator washers, and often have built-in heaters to heat the wash water. Even though European tumbler models have smaller tub sizes, the typical laundry load size is the same as a U.S. agitator laundry load — 7 pounds. The typical powder detergent dose weight is also comparable to U.S. agitator dosage at about 2.5 dry weight ounces (70 grams). Detergent and liquid fabric softener are usually dispensed from a drawer built into the front of the washer.

The new high-efficiency tumbler washers to be offered by U.S. appliance manufacturers are expected to be designed for load sizes and wash times comparable to those of today's agitator washers. Detergent dispensers will be a new feature on some washers.

As high-efficiency washers and new detergents become more widely available, information about the new detergents will be provided by The Soap and Detergent Association. Our intent is to help make this transition easy for consumers and to help them achieve laundry results in the new washers that are equivalent to or better than conventional agitator washers.

*Information about specific laundry products and their use in high-efficiency washers, may be available from the toll-free 800 numbers listed on product labels.*

*For answers to common questions about high-efficiency tumbler washers, see page 4. ■*

----- SDA ORDER FORM -----

**For an overview of energy efficient clothes washers and the effect this new technology may have on laundry products, order SDA's new booklet.**

Please send one *Detergents & Laundry Additives in High-Efficiency Washers* to:

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Title \_\_\_\_\_

Affiliation \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Fax \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City State Zip

Send orders to: CLF Brochures; The Soap and Detergent Association  
475 Park Avenue South; New York, NY 10016  
FAX: 212-213-0685; E-mail: orders@sдахq.org; Phone: 212-725-1262 X221

# Cleaning Products... In Our Homes, In Our Environment



## An Interactive Videoconference

**April 17, 1997**  
1:00pm - 4:00pm Eastern Time

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## Cleaning Products... In Our Homes, In Our Environment

### Featured on the Program:

**A Look To The Future:** A discussion of consumer trends that affect environmental issues, cleaning products and community outreach programs.

**Formulating Cleaning Products:** Hear from the experts about what goes into formulating cleaning products — with human and environmental safety in mind.

**Using and Disposing of Cleaning Products:** Discover strategies for safe and effective product and package use, waste reduction and disposal.

**Community Outreach:** A look at innovative community education programs that work!

**Product Update:** Hear about the newest developments in hard surface cleaners, laundry, dishwashing and personal care products, including package innovations. Learn about issues that impact product innovation, such as antimicrobial products and energy efficient washing machines and dishwashers.

## **YES! Sign me up as a downlink coordinator!**

Anticipated number of attendees: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Affiliation: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
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Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

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**Mail or fax this completed form to:** The Soap and Detergent Association  
475 Park Avenue South  
New York, NY 10016  
Fax: 212-213-0685

— OR —

**Register at our website:** <http://www.agnr.umd.edu/events/satvid.html>

## OPERATION CLEAN HANDS Regular Handwashing Prevents Disease

The Soap and Detergent Association reports that the American Society for Microbiology has launched Operation Clean Hands, a campaign to educate Americans about the health risks associated with poor handwashing habits.

Infectious diseases remain the leading cause of death and illness worldwide; in the United States, they are the third leading cause of death. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), handwashing is one of the most important means of preventing the spread of infectious diseases, including respiratory infections and gastrointestinal disorders.

Unlike other regimes designed to promote good health, the procedure for proper hand washing is simple and easy. It is important to know when — as well as how — to wash.

Hands should be washed *before* preparing or eating food, before treating a cut or wound, before tending to someone who is sick, and before inserting or removing contact lenses. Hands should be washed *after* going to the bathroom, after coughing, sneezing or blowing your nose, after handling uncooked foods, particularly raw meat, poultry or fish, and after handling garbage. They should also be washed after playing with or touching a pet, particularly reptiles and exotic animals, and after tending to someone who is sick or injured.

In order to eliminate germs, hands should be washed thoroughly. This means using warm or hot running water and soap. All surfaces, including wrists, palms, backs of hands and fingers, should be washed. If possible, a nail brush should be used to get under fingernails. Hands should be rubbed together for at least 10 to 15 seconds. When drying, begin at the forearms and work toward hands and fingertips. To avoid chapping and cracking, pat the skin dry rather than rubbing it. Use hand lotion to soothe dry skin.

As part of Operation Clean Hands, consumers can call 1-800-97-BAYER to receive a copy of the "Don't Get Caught Dirty Handed" brochure and a handwashing reminder sticker for placement near sinks. ■

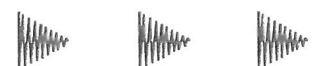
## JUVENILE HEALTH CARE PRODUCTS Boomer Parents Create A Buying Boomlet

Whether they view it as the extension of an existing product line or an opportunity for new offerings, manufacturers and retailers are beginning to recognize the potential for health care products in the juvenile market. The Soap and Detergent Association credits this interest to two converging trends: a generally more health-conscious public and the generation echo created by baby boomers having babies.

Vendors in dental, diagnostic and air-related categories are particularly responsive to this opportunity. Some products are being revised to coordinate with a juvenile decor. Cool mist humidifiers masquerade as friendly baby dinosaurs. Bathroom scales are adorned with brightly colored pictures of animals. A plaque remover, which comes in bright colors, has a whimsical shape that vaguely resembles an elephant. An air cleaner for children's rooms has rounded corners and comes in soft pastel colors. Because babies don't typically suffer from allergies or asthma for the first few years, the unit's filter does not need to target pollen and smoke as strongly as other air cleaners. This allows the manufacturer to price the unit more appropriately for the new parent market.

Other products are being redesigned to meet a child's specific needs. The pacifier thermometer has an orthodontic nipple, LCD display, last reading recall and sanitary cover. At least one electric toothbrush for kids has a charger base that looks like a video control and a LED system that lights up to remind the child to move to a different quadrant of the mouth.

Because licensing fees tend to drive costs up, some manufacturers and retailers are cautious about licensed products. Instead, product design generally focuses on simple, cheerful motifs in soft colors for babies and bright colors for youngsters. ■





**Q & A**  
**SDA Answers Your Questions About High-Efficiency Tumbler Washers**

*For more information about high-efficiency tumbler washers, see pages 1-2 and order SDA's new booklet, "Detergents & Laundry Additives in High-Efficiency Washers" (see page 2).*

**Q: Will I be able to use the same detergent I'm currently using with my agitator washer?**

A: Under some conditions, current detergents may give satisfactory cleaning results without over sudsing. But, it will often be necessary to reduce the recommended amount of detergent to control sudsing, thus leading to reduced cleaning performance. To avoid this, detergents are being developed specifically for high-efficiency washers to give the best cleaning results while maintaining lower suds levels. These new detergents will be available as the new washers become more widely available.

**Q: Will my clothes get clean?**

A: Yes, when an adequate amount of detergent is used and when over-sudsing does not occur. The high-efficiency tumbler washers will clean at least as effectively as the current agitator models. In addition, detergents are being reformulated to provide optimum cleaning and suds control in the new washing systems.

**Q: Can I wash the same amount of clothes in one load?**

A: Yes, the average wash load in current agitator washers and high-efficiency washers is the same — about 7 pounds — and load size flexibility will be maintained. Some models can easily handle larger loads.

**Q: Can bleaches, fabric softeners and other laundry additives be used in the new washers?**

A: Yes, although they will probably be added to the wash water via dispensers built into the machines. The actual method for adding laundry aids may vary among washer brands.

**Q: Can I still use pretreat and presoak products?**

A: Yes, there should be no change in the way you currently use these products.

**Q: Will I still be able to select wash cycles?**

A: Yes, high-efficiency washers will have cycles comparable to conventional agitator washers, so you can select the appropriate cycle for the type of garments being washed (permanent press, delicates, etc.)

**Q: Will it take me longer to do my laundry with the new washers?**

A: Total wash times are expected to be comparable to today's wash times, although this will vary from brand to brand.

**Q: Will the new washers rinse as well as my current washer?**

A: Yes. Even though high-efficiency washers use considerably less water, clothes will be rinsed thoroughly because they typically use two to four rinse cycles, compared to one rinse in conventional agitator washers.

**Q: Once the high-efficiency tumbler washers are being sold, will I still be able to buy detergent for my old washer?**

A: Yes, both agitator and tumbler washers will be available for an unforeseeable period of time. Detergent manufacturers will make detergents available for all washers on the market.■

## MISCELLANY

### Removing Carpet Odors

Depending on the source and treatment possibilities, some carpet odors are removable, while others are not, cautions The Soap and Detergent Association.

Treat the carpet as soon as possible, using a cleaning product recommended for carpets and rugs. The longer the source of the odor remains — particularly if it has penetrated the backing of wall-to-wall carpeting — the harder it is to remove the odor. Spilled material must be completely removed. Otherwise, the bacteria will continue to decay and produce odors. Since odors produced by mildew will recur with new mildew growth, it is important to find and eliminate the mildew source. Odors from cat waste are almost impossible to eliminate completely. Generally, the affected part of the carpet and pad will need to be replaced.

New carpets often have an odor that will disappear over time. To dispel it as quickly as possible, open the windows and keep the room well ventilated. If possible, air area rugs outdoors.

### Bye-bye Wrinkles; Hello Cotton

Wrinkle-resistant, all-cotton sheets are giving cotton/polyester blend sheets a run for their money, notes The Soap and Detergent Association. At least one major retailer reports that wrinkle-free cotton sheets now account for about 30% of their sales. Consumers have embraced them because they combine the appeal of natural fibers with the practicality of easy care.

Although industry experts report that the technology has existed for a long time, it is only recently that improved growing techniques have produced a cotton that is long enough and strong enough to withstand the process.

Although these sheets were initially somewhat expensive, consumer demand and increased distribution across all retail channels created a price decline and a market for patterns and mix-and-match coordinates. ■

## WHAT'S NEW?

Computer Peripherals are neutral-colored ABS plastic accessories designed to make the computer work area neater and more functional. All attach to the computer via double-sided tape or suction cups. Included are the MouseTrap with flexible arms to protect and store the mouse, a DocumentClip for viewing document and computer screen simultaneously, the UtilityCup for holding scissors and writing utensils and the BudVase. (Zelco Industries, Inc.; 630 South Columbus Ave.; C S #4445; Mt. Vernon, NY 10551-4445)

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Frynetics' remote visual signaling device is the perfect smoke alarm companion for the hearing impaired. When the alarm on an interconnected detector is triggered, high intensity strobe lights flash approximately 60 times per minute. The device can be installed almost anywhere within the owner's line of sight. Several strobes, in different rooms, can be connected to a single smoke detector.

(Fyrentics, Inc.; 1055 Stevenson Court; Suite 102 W; Roselle, IL 60172)

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It's enough to uncurl your hair! The Euro 1875 watt hair dryer features a straightening device to relax curly or wavy hair. The anodized metal plate/comb gets hot while the user is drying her hair. When the comb runs through the hair, it's straightened. The dryer also features a cool shot button, three switch position and a removable filter.

(Conair Corp.; One Cummings Point Road; Stamford, CT 06904)

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Ooops!

In our September/October 1996 issue, we inadvertently printed the wrong address to order a free home safety booklet from the National Electric Safety Foundation. The correct address is: National Electric Safety Foundation; 1300 North 17th Street, Suite 1847; Rosslyn, VA 22209. To receive the booklet, enclose a 55-cent stamped, self-addressed #10 envelope. ■





## “KEEP IT CLEAN” BRIEFS

To prevent discoloration of fabrics, use hair preparations before putting on your clothes or put a towel over your clothing before spraying.

Many hair sprays, mousses and gels contain alcohol, which can cause permanent color loss in some fabrics. This color loss may show up after the garment is cleaned.

Lacquers in some hair sprays can cause dark stains around the collar, neck area and shoulders. These dark stains are not necessarily permanent but may be difficult to remove.

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Clean your dust mop before storing it. To avoid making a dust cloud, put a damp paper bag over the head of the mop before shaking it.

Carefully measure the correct amount of laundry detergent for the wash load you are using. When too little detergent is used, clothes can become dull and dingy, white items become grey or yellowed, body soils aren't removed from around cuffs and collars, lint gets redeposited onto clothes and greasy-looking stains can appear.

The proper amount of detergent will soften water to allow the detergent to do its cleaning job; loosen dirt and soils; and hold the removed dirt, soil and lint in the wash water until it can be rinsed away.

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Store cleaning supplies where you use them (in the kitchen and bathroom), so you don't have to keep going from room to room to find them. By cleaning as you go (wiping the bathroom vanity after each use, etc.) dirt won't accumulate and clean ups will be faster. ■

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