



CleaningMatters

Tips and Trends from the American Cleaning Institute®

March/April 2012

Features

- **Simplify Your Laundry Routine**
The Less Steps, The Better
- **Quack for a Reason™**
ACI Hosts First-Ever Charity Duck Race
- **Celebrating Earth Day... in the Laundry Room**
Wash, Fold, and Remain Environmentally Conscious
- **Removing Stains, Reducing Footprints**
ACI Releases First-Ever Sustainability Report Findings
- **Wear Green, Keep Hands Clean**
Be Lucky, Be Healthy, Be Germ Free
- **How to Make Every Week Poison Prevention Week**
ACI Celebrates an Important Anniversary
- **ACI and Earth 911**
A Growing Partnership
- **Ask Nancy!/Tell Nancy!**
- **Clean Ideas: Wiping up Common Cleaning Mistakes**
Make this the Most Effective Spring Cleaning Ever

Calendar of Clean

March is...

- St Patrick's Day: March 17
[see Wear Green, Keep Hands Clean]
- First day of Spring: March 20
[see Clean Ideas]
- National Poison Prevention Week: March 18-24
[see How to Make Every Week Poison Prevention Week]

April is...

- Cleaning for a Reason Week: April 18-24
[see Quack for a Reason™ Charity Duck Race]
- Earth Day: April 22
[see Simplify Your Laundry Routine and ACI & Earth 911]

Simplify Your Laundry Routine

The Less Steps, The Better

We know laundry can be a big task, but it just got easier with new liquid-unit-dose laundry detergent. Just put one pac of pre-measured detergent into your machine to simplify your laundry routine. How's that for innovation and ease?

Now is the time to take small steps to clean up your laundry routine, and to make your home as safe as possible for your family. While we know laundry is one of your daily or weekly tasks, take a moment to read through the tips below to ensure you are using and storing liquid-unit-dose laundry detergent properly, and you'll be on your way to a convenient, simpler laundry routine.

How do I use this new product?

- Add the pac to the bottom – also known as the drum – of the washing machine, both for top-loader and high-efficiency front-loader machines, before adding clothes, for best results. Do not add the pac to your machine's dispenser drawer.
- **Do not cut or tear the pouch.** It is designed to dissolve completely in the machine, even in cold water.
- Use one pac for most loads, but for heavily soiled loads you can use two.
- Do not use for hand washing or pretreating.
- If pacs stick together, do not pull hard, as the pouches may tear. If two pacs stick together, place them together in the machine.
- Handle the pacs with dry hands only, and remember to close the bag or tub completely after each use to keep out moisture. The pacs' film is designed to dissolve quickly, even in small amounts of water, so it is important to store pacs away from water.



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Simplify Your Laundry Routine (cont.)

The Less Steps, The Better

- Keep liquid-unit-dose out of the reach of children and pets between every load to prevent unintended exposure.
- Always ensure reclosable bag or tub is tightly sealed during storage.
- As with other laundry products, keep product in its original container with intact labels.
- Store products away from food, as you would with other laundry products.

NewsFlash

Quack for a Reason™

ACI Hosts First-Ever Charity Duck Race

The American Cleaning Institute® (ACI) hosted the first-ever Quack for a Reason duck race, and proceeds will benefit the Cleaning for a Reason foundation. The race, sponsored by Shell Chemical LP, had 125 little plastic ducks speeding along the winding river at Grande Lakes Orlando, to raise money for ACI's charity of choice, Cleaning for a Reason, a nonprofit serving the entire United States and Canada, that partners with maid services to offer free professional house cleanings to help women undergoing treatment for cancer, any type of cancer. For ideas on how you too can support Cleaning for a Reason, go to www.cleaninginstitute.org/cleaning_for_a_reason_week_2012/.



Celebrating Earth Day... in the Laundry Room

Wash, Fold, and Remain Environmentally Conscious

From cars to schools, today's world is all about going green. Even the products and appliances we use in the laundry room have become more environmentally friendly. Though you may have bought an energy-efficient washing machine, are using a concentrated laundry detergent, and are recycling your empty laundry-product packages, there still might be more you can do while cleaning your clothes to lessen your environmental impact. (Lessening the actual loads of laundry each week is still a mystery we'd like to solve!)

How can you make laundry day (*every* laundry day) Earth Day? It's easy. And even the slightest change in routine can have a positive impact on the environment, not to mention your family's finances.

- **Wash with the Coldest Water Possible.** You'll save energy by not heating up the water. Fortunately, many detergents are now formulated to perform well in cold water. Read and follow product package and garment label directions for the most effective water temperature to use. Switching your temperature setting from hot to warm can cut energy use in half, and using the cold cycle reduces energy use even more. (www.EnergyStar.gov) Besides, wouldn't you rather save the hot water for your shower?
- **Select the Right Amount of Water for Each Load.** Avoid overfilling your washing machine, and save water and energy.
- **Spin Your Clothes at the Highest Recommended Speed.** Ever seen dogs come out of a pool or lake? They don't just stand there and drip dry; they shake all over the place. This helps them get rid of the excess water on their fur and dry faster. Same goes for your washing machine. The spin cycle "shakes" (removes) the water from your clothes. The faster it spins, the more water gets removed. The less time your clothes have to spend in the dryer, the more energy (read: money) you save.
- **Use the Right Amount of Detergent for the Washer and the Load.** Read the instructions for your washer and on the detergent package.
- **Speaking of Detergent ...** If you haven't already switched to a concentrated detergent, you might want to consider doing so. Why? A concentrated product comes in a much smaller package. You'll get the same number of laundry loads out of a smaller bottle, but use much less plastic. And these smaller bottles take up less space on a delivery truck, which reduces the energy costs to transport them from the manufacturer to the store. (And not for nothing, it's easier to carry a small jug from the store into the house. Unless of course you prefer the upper-body workout.)
- **Two-fers, Anyone?** Instead of buying a separate bottle of bleach or fabric softener, consider looking for a two-in-one product – such as a detergent with a built-in stain remover. Again, less packaging (which takes energy to produce) and lower shipping costs.
- **The Best Time for Laundry.** As we head into warmer weather, deciding when to do your laundry can determine the amount of energy you use. Running appliances creates heat, so use the washing machine and dryer at night when it's cooler outside. This way, you won't have to use more energy to cool your house during the day.
- **Don't Forget to Recycle!** Nothing like squeezing out the last drop of detergent to make it go farther (store nearly empty jugs upside down and you may find enough for a whole other load!). But when you've really gotten to the end of a bottle, please dispose of it properly. Rinse and re-cap the empty container to protect pets and young children, and put it in the recycling bin.

Do you have any tips for how to be more environmentally friendly? (Aside from wearing your clothes so often between cleanings that they walk themselves to the washing machine, of course.) Visit our [Facebook](#) page and share your ways of turning laundry day into Earth Day.



Removing Stains, Reducing Footprints

ACI Releases First-Ever Sustainability Report Findings

American Cleaning Institute® (ACI) member companies aren't only working hard to develop products that keep your home clean. They are also constantly striving for ways to clean up themselves – namely, by reducing their environmental impact. Sustainability reports are useful in sharing information about achieving this important goal.

A group of ACI member companies participated in the *ACI Sustainability Metrics Project*, a program that provided data on energy and greenhouse gas emissions (GHGs), water use, and hazardous and nonhazardous waste generation that is associated with the U.S. production of cleaning products.

“Through our first-ever public Sustainability Report, ACI wants to better inform key audiences about our progress and identify where we have challenges to address,” said Ernie Rosenberg, ACI President and CEO. “We’re taking a few small steps forward with this metrics project that will place our industry in a leadership position on measuring and reporting sustainability, and we plan to build and expand upon this effort through the sustainability journey that lies ahead.”

Why is this report important?

In tracking energy use, companies can compare themselves to industry averages, set reduction goals and work to find ways to improve. The same holds true for water, which is used in all facets of ACI-related products – from raw-material production, to manufacturing, to end consumer use. And if manufacturers can measure the amount of waste they produce and dispose, they can discover ways to reduce their impact on the environment as well as reduce the cost of production.

What did we learn?

- Total energy use decreased by approximately 18% per ton of production.
- The rate of GHG emission per unit of production decreased by approximately 25%.
- Water use decreased by approximately 10% per unit of production.
- Waste generation per unit of production decreased between 2008 and 2009, but increased by about 2% overall between 2007 and 2009. (This increase is attributed largely to an increase in waste by a single company whose overall waste generation is much higher than the others.)

“A number of ACI member companies have been at the forefront of sustainability reporting for the past decade,” said Rosenberg. “Many more are beginning to talk about how sustainability is an important part of their daily business activities.”

“While this Sustainability Report is new, our industry’s social responsibility efforts are not,” Rosenberg said. “We have contributed to enhanced public health, social welfare and education for years. Our members have been reducing the environmental footprint of their products literally for decades. We should be proud of our history and enthusiastic about what we will contribute - economically, socially and environmentally – in the years ahead.”

Wear Green, Keep Hands Clean

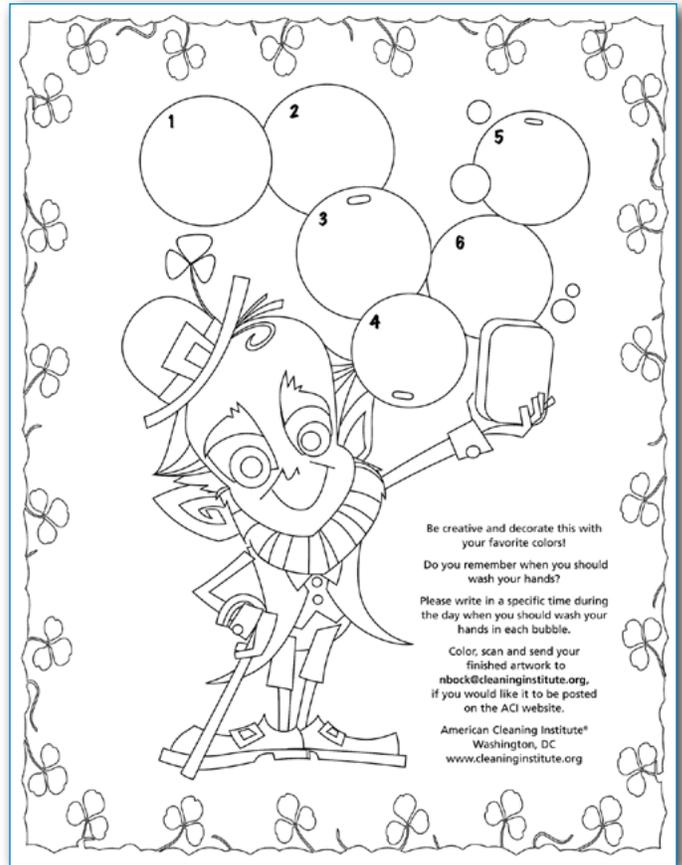
Be Lucky, Be Healthy, Be Germ Free

While your wee ones are outside digging for four-leaf clovers and pots of gold this St. Patrick's Day, their luckiest charms may indeed be clean hands. Why? Cold and flu germs, which abound this time of year, are just itching to hitch free rides on dirty fingers. Yet, unlike leprechauns – which you can't see because they don't exist – germs are not visible to the naked eye, but very real.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), keeping hands clean through improved hand hygiene is one of the most important steps kids (and adults) can take to avoid getting sick and spreading germs to others. And, as with everything else in life, there's a right way to do it.

- Wet hands with clean, running water and apply soap.
- Rub hands together to make a lather, and scrub well, including the backs, between fingers and under the nails.
- Continue rubbing for 20 seconds (which is the same as singing "Happy Birthday" twice through).
- Rinse well under running water.
- Dry your hands using a clean towel, or air-dry them.

So, before anyone digs in to the Irish soda bread or corned beef, make sure they wash their hands first! While talking to others about the important connection between good hygiene and good health, encourage them to complete the ACI St. Patrick's Day coloring sheet and put it on display for all to see! Don't forget to scan a copy and send it to nbock@cleaninginstitute.org so that we can add it to our artwork gallery on www.cleaninginstitute.org.



How to Make Every Week Poison Prevention Week

ACI Celebrates an Important Anniversary

In 1961, Congress enacted National Poison Prevention Week to be celebrated the third week of every March. But we believe poisonings can be prevented 24/7, 365 days a year. Shockingly, 90% of all poisonings occur in the home, which is the one environment you'd think people had the most control over.

A poisoning is when someone swallows, breathes, touches or gets splashed in the eye with a substance that can cause sickness or death. Yet not all of these substances are in and of themselves poisonous. An adult may take an aspirin to ease some pain, but when a two-year-old ingests a handful of pills thinking they're candy, it can result in much more than a headache.

Here are some poison-prevention tips:

- Keep all cleaning products out of sight and reach of children; install childproof safety latches on cabinets.
- Store food and household cleaning products in separate areas.
- Keep products in their original, labeled containers, and *read* those labels prior to use.

- If the phone or doorbell rings when you're in the middle of using a product, close the bottle or box. Many incidents happen when adults are distracted.
- Wash hands thoroughly after using a product, and, likewise, wash any utensils that may have been used to measure or dispense a product.
- Turn on fans or open windows when using household and chemical products for proper ventilation.
- NEVER combine cleaning agents with ammonia. Some chemical mixtures can create deadly fumes.
- Don't use empty cleaning-product containers to store food, and, likewise, never use cups or baby bottles to store detergents or cleansers.

In case of an accidental poisoning or emergency, call the number listed on the product label. Or call the U.S. Poison Control Center's toll-free hotline at 800-222-1222.

Learn more about the **National Poison Prevention Week Council** at www.poisonprevention.org. Help raise awareness about poisoning by following the Council at www.twitter.com/PreventPoison, liking the [Facebook page](#) and sharing these links with your family, friends and community.

ACI and Earth 911

A Growing Partnership

Did you know there was a one-stop-shop resource for all things recycling? Earth911.com is a comprehensive web directory that provides consumers with more than one million ways to recycle more than 300 different materials in every state. The American Cleaning Institute® (ACI), an association that represents the U.S. cleaning-product industry, is proud to be their partner.

"Better living is the backbone of all that we do at the Institute," says Nancy Bock, ACI's Sr. Vice President, Education. "Hygiene and cleaning products have played a continuous role in enhancing health and our quality of life, so it is only fitting that we partner with an

organization that focuses on social sustainability and fosters a positive environmental impact."

Visitors to Earth911.com can now find popular, actionable ACI articles, like the "Room-by-Room Green Cleaning Guide" and "Going Beyond Green While Getting Clean," and its Handbook on Eco-Friendly Household Cleaners, featuring biodegradable products made by ACI member companies.

To learn how to properly recycle household cleaners in your area, visit Earth911.com, dial 1-800- CLEANUP® or download the free mobile application, iRecycle®.



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.

Q: I washed my sterling silver and stainless-steel flatware in the dishwasher – in the same compartment in the silverware basket. Now, my silver has black marks that won't come off with silver polish. Is there anything I can do?

A: Uh oh. Though silver cutlery can go in the dishwasher, it should never be placed in the same compartment as stainless-steel flatware. If the two metals touch they can react to each other, and the silver can be permanently damaged. It sounds like that's what may have happened since recleaning it with silver polish didn't remove the marks. Your silver is still usable; now it just has "character."

Q: I want to teach my children to do their own laundry. What's the latest advice on sorting loads?

A: Good for you! We don't do our children any favors by letting them abstain from chores. As far as sorting, it's important to wash like with like. So, teach them to check garment labels. All clothing and fabrics that call for the same water temperature, wash cycles and type of detergent should be washed together. Though it's always a good idea to:

- Wash dark and bright clothes in one load, pastels and lighter colors in another, and whites should be kept separate.
- Wash lightly soiled clothes separate from the really grimy stuff. Bet you didn't know that cleaner clothes can become dirtier in filthy wash water!
- Sort items like fuzzy sweatshirts, robes and bulky bath towels that might shed lint, and wash those separately.

But, remember – better that your kids not do the laundry *perfectly* than not do it at all. So go easy on them when they're just starting out.

Nancy Bock is Senior Vice President, Education at the American Cleaning Institute®



Clean Ideas

Wiping up Common Cleaning Mistakes

Make this the Most Effective Spring Cleaning Ever

Spring has just about sprung! Which means it's time to fling open the windows, shake out the rugs, and kick spring cleaning into full gear. But, before you get all mop-happy with visions of dust bunnies scurrying away, Nancy Bock, Sr. Vice President, Education, at American Cleaning Institute® (ACI), points out some common cleaning slipups, and offers tips on how you can be more effective and efficient in getting your home to sparkle.

Slipup #1: Cleaning Around Clutter

Much of what makes a home look messy is the accumulation of stuff you don't use or need. Clothes you haven't worn in years, knick-knacks that simply knock around, books you've already read (and won't read again), toys the kids outgrew ... the list could go on and on. Why waste time dusting or washing the things that are just taking up space? Spring is a great time to purge, purge, purge. And here are some great ways to unclutter your home without loading up landfills.

- **Sell.** Not only do you have an opportunity to clean your house, you can make some money in the process. Drive around any neighborhood on a sunny spring weekend and you'll find dozens of garage sales. Why? It's the perfect way to get rid of small appliances, clothes, toys, books, jewelry, housewares and more. They say one man's junk is another man's treasure, and that has never been truer than when it comes to yard sales. Besides, you'll meet neighbors you might have never known. If you don't have time to host a sale, consider bringing these items to a consignment store.
- **Donate.** If sitting in your driveway showcasing all of your possessions doesn't float your boat, or there are no consignment stores in your area, you can still find a good home for all the items you don't want in your house anymore. Charities such as Salvation Army, Goodwill, the Vietnam Veterans of America or the Lupus Foundation of America will pick up boxes and bags of charitable goods right from your door. You can also drop off donations to your local charity, church or shelter. Nothing like helping someone else while cleaning up your own digs!

- **Freecycle.** Do you have a still-worthy piece of furniture that you don't need anymore? Perhaps there's a large item of sports equipment you'd love, but don't want to spend the money. [Freecycle](#) is a web-based nonprofit network that facilitates the free exchange of goods between people in their own towns. Each local group is volunteer-moderated, and membership is free.
- **Recycle.** For all those things that can't be donated or sold, make sure you dispose of them properly. Recycle newspapers and mixed papers in a designated bin. (Keep that bin or paper grocery bag on hand while you clean.) Condense the contents of nearly empty plastic containers (only if items are the same!) and recycle the containers along with glass bottles or jars you may have saved "just because."

Slipup #2: Sparse Supplies

So, you've cleared out the clutter and you're ready to go. But are you? Without all the right tools, not only will you be inefficient, you may end up using the wrong product, which could result in injury or damage to a surface. Invest in a handled bucket that will hold the following supplies, and store it someplace convenient. (But not too convenient! [See the article on Poison Prevention.](#)):

- All-purpose spray cleaner (for small, washable areas)
- All-purpose powder or liquid cleaner (for large, washable surfaces like floors and walls)
- Abrasive cleanser (to remove heavy amounts of soil in small areas)
- Nonabrasive cleanser (for cleaning easily scratched surfaces, including porcelain sinks and ceramic tile)
- Chlorine bleach (an effective mold and mildew remover)
- Glass cleaner
- Furniture-dusting product
- Metal polish (optional)
- Granite cleaner (optional)
- Vacuum cleaner bags (optional)
- Trash bags

Clean Ideas

Wiping up Common Cleaning Mistakes (cont.)

Make this the Most Effective Spring Cleaning Ever

Slipup #3: Plan? What Plan?

Do you do your weekly grocery shop without a list? Would you head out on a road trip without directions? Map out your cleaning tasks and create a schedule. This will make the job run smoother and go faster. Nancy Bock, ACI's Sr. Vice President, Education, has this advice:

- **Determine your cleaning style.** Some people prefer to clean one room at a time; others prefer to do one task at a time. Which one are you?
- **Prioritize.** If you do choose to clean one room at a time, decide on the best order. Dinner guests coming soon? Perhaps the living room and dining room might be a higher priority than, say, the upstairs bathroom.
- **Clear out the Big Stuff.** Do items such as bed linens, area rugs and curtains need to be laundered? If so, remove them from the room. It will be much easier to clean the rest of the space when those larger items are gone.

Slipup #4: Going at It Alone

"If you want all the days of your lives to seem sunny as summer weather, make sure when there's housework to do, that you do it together!" It's been 40 years since Carol Channing said this on *Free to Be You and Me*, but it still holds true.

- **Enlist Family or Friends.** Everyone above the age of two can help out in some way, big or small – whether that's putting blocks back into a bin or scrubbing the toilet bowl. Assign tasks according to age and ability.
- **Make It Fun.** Let's face it – housework is no day at the beach. But it doesn't have to be pure drudgery either. Put on some lively music, create built-in rewards for tasks completed or make a game out of it. Hide surprises in places that need cleaning, or create a contest to see who can put away the most things that are green, or shaped like a circle.
- **Plan Ahead.** Cleaning burns calories, so make sure you have snacks or lunch readily available to provide boosts of much-needed energy. And if you have asked a friend for help, think about ways you can say thank-you – either a token of appreciation or a promise to return the favor.
- **Outsource.** If time is a constraint and your budget allows, call in the pros. Just be sure to straighten up and remove clutter before hired help arrives. You don't want them to vacuum up tiny toys or misplace important papers that were lying around. Besides, if you want someone to clean the floor, they need to be able to see it.

