



March/April 2006

Calendar of Clean

March is...

- **American Red Cross Month:**
http://www.redcross.org/article/0,1072,0_332_4123,00.html
- **National Poison Prevention Week:** March 19-25, See "Poison Prevention"
<http://www.poisonprevention.org/main.html>
- **National Nutrition Month:** See "Delicious, Nutritious – Safe"
http://www.eatright.org/cps/rde/xchg/ada/hs.xsl/media_1579_ENU_HTML.htm

April is...

- **World Health Day:** April 7th.
<http://www.who.int/world-health-day/2006/en/index.html>

Features

- **[Poison Prevention](#)**
Keeping children safe is everyone's responsibility
- **[News Flash: Antibacterial Hygiene Products](#)**
Playing a role in our everyday lives
- **[Principles of Sustainable Development](#)**
SDA committed to enhancing human health, quality of life
- **[Survey Says](#)**
Spring is the best time for ridding homes of dust and clutter
- **[Go for the Green](#)**
Putting St. Patrick's Day stains to rest
- **[Debunking a Fabric Softener Myth](#)**
Fabric softener sheets shouldn't harm a dryer's lint screen
- **[Delicious, Nutritious – and Safe](#)**
Tips for packing a safe lunch for work and school
- **[Highlights](#)**
SDA's History, Then & Now... Spotlight: Home Safe Home
- **[Cleaning Questions? Ask Nancy!](#)**
- **[Home Safe Home Emergency Contact List \(PDF\)](#)**
- **[Hand Hygiene Fact Sheet \(PDF\)](#)**
New resource about products that clean hands and/or kill germs on hands at home and on-the-go!

Poison Prevention

Keeping children safe is everyone's responsibility

Poison Prevention Week (March 19-25) was established to promote safety from unintentional poisonings in both the home and the community. It's sponsored by The National Poison Prevention Week Council, a group of more than 30 national organizations, including The Soap and Detergent Association, with an interest in and commitment to programs aimed at preventing unintentional poisonings.

"Children Act Fast ... So Do Poisons!" is the basic theme of Poison Prevention Week. It takes only a few minutes for a child to grab and swallow something that could be poisonous. And the average home is full

of chemicals, medicines and cleaning supplies that can be potential hazards for children.

Be Alert

Take away the opportunity and you've automatically reduced the chance for an accidental poisoning when small children are around.

- **Schedule routine cleaning around the kids' routines**, such as nap time or when they aren't at home.
- **Don't be distracted when you're cleaning.** Keep your attention on the tasks at hand and the children around you. Save activities like talking on a cell phone, conversing with another adult in the room or "listening" to the TV for another time.
- **Don't leave children unattended around cleaning products.** If you need to answer the doorbell or the phone, take the child with you.
- **Don't leave cleaning buckets containing liquid unattended.** Besides the obvious chance of spilling, slipping and sipping, there's the fact that toddlers are "top heavy." If they topple into a bucket, even one with a very small amount of liquid, they could drown because they can't pull themselves up.

Store Smart

Because children are naturally curious, the danger doesn't end when the cleaning is finished.

- **Close cleaning product caps securely.** Even child-resistant packaging doesn't work if the container isn't properly closed.
- **Lock products up.** Store them in a location that's away from children, pets and food. Install child-resistant locks on cabinets and doors.
- **Keep cleaning products in their original containers.** If an accident occurs, the label should provide information concerning the product's contents and advice on what immediate first-aid to perform.
- **Carefully dispose of empty cleaning containers.** Replace the caps, then discard in a sealed recycling bin or garbage container that's safe from exploring children and pets.

If there is a poison-related emergency, call **the Poison Control Center's hotline:**

1-800-222-1222. Post this toll-free number, which operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week, next to every phone in the house.

News Flash

Antibacterial Hygiene Products

Playing a role in our everyday lives

Every day, people come in contact with millions of germs, including bacteria that can cause illness and lead to missed school days. While frequent Handwashing and good personal hygiene are essential for preventing the spread of germs, antibacterial products can provide consumers with extra germ-fighting protection. Antimicrobial soaps and washes can reduce or eliminate bacteria that can lead to skin infections, intestinal illness or other commonly transmitted diseases.

Recently The Soap and Detergent Association (SDA) and The Cosmetic, Toiletry, and Fragrance Association (CTFA) joined forces to submit documents to the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) that endorse requiring consumer antibacterial hand and body products to meet the same standards of effectiveness as healthcare products. The coalition issued a statement that supports "requiring consumer antibacterial products to meet the same efficacy level as professional products, as long as an appropriate,

standardized method of testing is used by the FDA."

Antibac Facts

The SDA/CTFA industry coalition presented many compelling reasons for their stance:

- Antibacterial products are effective in helping to control the growth and spread of germs.
- Well-established research demonstrates that antibacterial products render higher levels of bacterial reduction than products without an active ingredient.
- While laboratory studies have speculated about a link between antimicrobial products and bacterial resistance to antibiotics, there is no clinical, real-world evidence of increased resistance.

Handwashing How-to's

Antimicrobial soaps and washes – whether used by consumers in the home or by medical personnel in the hospital – are designed to reduce or eliminate bacteria that can lead to skin infections, intestinal illnesses or other commonly transmitted diseases. But a quick five-second handwashing isn't going to do the trick.

Here's how to do it properly:

- Wet hands with warm water and apply liquid, bar or powder soap.
- Rub hands together vigorously for the amount of time it takes to sing the "Happy Birthday" song twice.
- Rinse hands well under warm running water.
- Dry hands with a paper towel or air dryer.
- When soap and water aren't available, sanitizers and antibacterial wipes are highly recommended for helping to maintain good hand hygiene.

For more information, go to <http://www.germsmart.com>.

Principles of Sustainable Development

SDA committed to enhancing human health, quality of life

The Soap and Detergent Association is dedicated to enhancing health and quality of life through cleaning products and practices. To reinforce this commitment, SDA recently released its Principles for Sustainable Development. These principles focus on three important areas.

Principles for Human Health and Environmental Quality

- To only market products that have been shown to be safe for humans and the environment, through careful consideration of the potential health and environmental effects, exposures and releases that will be associated with their production, transportation, use and disposal.
- To promote transparent communication of safety and handling information across the chain of commerce.
- To support basic research to resolve uncertainties around human and environmental safety when they arise.
- To obey the spirit and intent of all national laws and regulations.

Principles for Social Well-Being

- To contribute to a better quality of life for our consumers, business partners, employees and the communities in which we operate.
- To develop products and ingredients that effectively deliver claimed benefits.
- To promote the safe use of our products with the public.

- To support society's efforts to enhance public health and well-being through improved hygiene and sanitation.
- To maintain a high level of product stewardship throughout the chain of commerce.
- To operate our manufacturing facilities with due regard to the health and safety of our employees, the communities in which we operate and the wider environment.

Principles for Economic Growth

- To contribute to economic growth, including the economic success of the industry's shareholders, employees and communities.
- To innovate to improve products both in terms of performance and environmental impact.

SDA's members include cleaning product manufacturers, their ingredient and packaging suppliers, and oleochemical producers. Together, they produce more than 90 percent of the cleaning products marketed in the U.S.

Survey Says

Spring is the best time for ridding homes of dust and clutter

Sixty percent of Americans agree that springtime is the best time to rid their homes of dirt and clutter, according to the 2006 Soap and Detergent Association (SDA) Spring Cleaning Survey. More than one-third (37%) of respondents, however, prefer to conduct their major cleaning projects at other times throughout the year.

For most Americans, spring is a great time to clean and freshen up their home. They are getting rid of a winter's worth of dust, dirt and grime. Of course, people also appreciate that there are significant physical and emotional benefits to keeping a clean house all year long.

The SDA Spring Cleaning Survey, conducted by International Communications Research (ICR) via a February 2006 telephone survey of 1,009 American adults, revealed the top benefits consumers realize from frequent house cleaning:

- 98% feel good about themselves when their home is clean.
- 97% believe their families appreciate a clean home.
- 97% say their furnishings will last longer if they are cleaned regularly.
- 94% understand that cleaning can help reduce incidences of illness, allergies and asthma.
- 89% say their clothes will last longer if they are clean.

Survey participants were also asked to best describe their personal cleaning product purchases.

- 44% describe themselves as "familiar" buyers, selecting only what they need and sticking with known products and brands.
- 22% claim to be "creative," buying a variety of products to enhance their homes.
- "Advanced" purchasers (21%) buy both products they need and products they want, trying new items more frequently.
- Finally, "experimentals" (7%) always try what is new and more convenient.

SDA reminds consumers that the easiest way to get the most value out of their cleaning products is to read the product label directions. You want to make sure you're using them effectively, properly, and most importantly, safely.

Go for the Green

Putting St. Patrick's Day stains to rest

When the St. Paddy's Day celebrations are over, don't rely on the luck of the Irish to get rid of those green stains. Instead, follow these no-blarney tips, courtesy of The Soap and Detergent Association. Always remember to first test the stain-removal method on an inconspicuous area of the garment.

Green face make-up: If make-up is oil- or wax-based, remove excess with the back of a spoon. Sponge the remaining stain with a pre-wash stain remover. Wash in the hottest water that's safe for the fabric.

Green food-coloring: Sponge the stain promptly with cool water. If the stain remains, soak in cool water for at least 30 minutes. After soaking, pre-treat with a pre-wash stain remover or liquid laundry detergent, and then launder.

Green crayons: Using a dull knife, scrape off the surface wax. Place the stain between paper towels and press with a warm iron. Replace paper towels frequently until no more wax is absorbed. Place the stain face down on clean paper towels. Sponge the remaining stain with a prewash stain remover or a cleaning fluid formulated to remove wax stains. Blot with paper towels; let dry. Then launder.

Green marking pens: Place the stain face down on clean paper towels. Sponge denatured alcohol into the area around the stain, and then apply it directly to the stain. Continue sponging the stain with alcohol, frequently changing the paper towels underneath, transferring as much ink as possible to the paper towels. Rinse thoroughly and then launder in the hottest water that's safe for the fabric. Note: Ink from some markers may leave permanent stains.

Green beer: Soak or sponge the stain in cool water. Pretreat with a prewash stain remover or liquid laundry detergent. Launder using oxygen bleach or chlorine bleach, if safe for the fabric.

Debunking a Fabric Softener Myth

Fabric softener sheets shouldn't harm a dryer's lint screen

Part of good maintenance for optimum dryer performance is keeping the lint filter screen clean. Generally, this means brushing or vacuuming off the accumulated lint.

The Myth: Sometimes a conscientious consumer will take the screen to the sink and try to clean it with water. When water doesn't pass through the screen, the assumption is that the screen is clogged. A popular urban myth says that residue from the fabric softener is the culprit.

The Facts: The Soap and Detergent Association would like to put this myth to rest. The lint screen is constructed of a very tight mesh that is designed to pick up minute particles or fibers from items in the dryer. Air can easily pass through this fine mesh. But even with a brand-new filter, water is too dense to pass through it unless forced.

Good Maintenance: If you notice that it's taking longer for your clothes to dry, and you have been keeping your lint screen clean, it's time to call in qualified service personnel to clean the entire dryer venting system.

Delicious, Nutritious – and Safe

Tips for packing a safe lunch for work and school

Don't let lunchtime companions include bacteria that can cause foodborne illnesses. To help keep them at bay, The Soap and Detergent Association (SDA) offers these tips for packing the safest possible lunches.

Prepare Safe

- Make sure your hands, food preparation surfaces and utensils are clean. Use soap and hot water to effectively get rid of bacteria.
- Wash fruits and vegetables thoroughly and paper-towel them dry before packing.
- Bacteria grow more slowly on cold items, so make sandwiches the night before and refrigerate until morning. Or, pre-chill sandwich fixings, like bread and canned tuna, by storing them in the refrigerator until morning assembly.
- For added safety, sandwiches (minus lettuce, tomatoes or mayonnaise) can be frozen overnight. Choose coarse-textured bread, such as whole wheat, so the bread won't get soggy when it thaws.
- Single-size juice packs can double as a cold pack if left in the freezer overnight. The juice will thaw by lunchtime, but will still be cold.
- Some foods can be safe until lunchtime without a cold source. Choices include uncut fruits, vegetables, hard cheese, unopened canned meat and fish, chips, bread, crackers, peanut butter, jelly, mustard, pickles, packaged pudding, juice packs, canned fruits and juices, granola, dry cereal, raisins and cookies.

Pack Safe

- An insulated lunch box is the best container.
- If you're packing the lunch in a brown bag, double-bag it for better insulation and add a cold source, such as a cold pack or frozen juice pack.
- Pack hot foods in an insulated thermos so they stay hot until lunchtime. Pre-warm the thermos by filling it with boiling water. Let it stand for a few minutes, then empty out the water and put in the food. Keep the thermos closed until lunchtime.

Store Safe

- If possible, store the packed lunch in a refrigerator at work or school.
- Don't let a packed lunch sit near a heat source, such as a radiator or a sunny window.

Eat Safe

- Wash hands with soap and warm water before and after eating. If washing with soap and water isn't possible, be sure the lunchbox contains antibacterial or alcohol-based handwipes or hand gel.
- When lunch is over, discard uneaten food. Freezer gel packs and insulated lunch boxes will keep food safe for a limited time, but are not intended for all-day storage.

Highlights

In celebration of SDA's 80 Anniversary, every issue of Cleaning Matters in 2006 will highlight a bit of SDA's history.

SDA'S HISTORY, THEN AND NOW...

Spotlight: Home Safe Home

In the 1950s, as The Soap and Detergent Association edged toward its 30th anniversary, detergents gained widespread use in the postwar economy. New technology created the need for new products. As a result,

environmental issues began to surface ... and SDA responded accordingly with many environmental achievements in the 1950s, '60s, and '70s.

- The SDA Technical Advisory Council was founded.
- The term "biodegradable" was coined by SDA.
- Extensive environmental research on cleaning product ingredients was conducted and presented to Federal and local governments and consumers.
- The first in a series of Detergents In Depth symposia brought the latest cleaning product research to educators.
- A series of technical reports on surfactants was developed:
 - *Detergents and Water Pollution Abatement*
 - *Field Test of LAS Biodegradability*
 - *Surfactant Effects on Humans and Other Mammals*
 - *Test Procedure and Standards – ABS and LAS Biodegradability*



SDA also demonstrated concern for social development with *Housekeeping Directions*. Used by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Department of Housing and Urban Development, State Education Departments and welfare agencies, it helped achieve longer usage of apparel and household furnishings and prepared audiences for gainful employment in household related occupations.

SDA's commitment to concerns about the health and safety of children began with *Home Safe Home*, a program that highlights ways to prevent home accidents. It was created for those who worked with pre-school children, and was used by the U.S. Departments of Family and Child Services, Social Services, Public Welfare and Public Health, Head Start and day care centers. Tens of millions of these popular leaflets have been distributed.

To demonstrate SDA's continued commitment to home safety, a new and improved version of Home Safe Home is now available for families.

Download the new [Home Safe Home PDF](#) flyer now.

Cleaning Questions? *Ask Nancy!*

Q: Our whole family loves to color Easter eggs. Despite laminated aprons and a plastic tablecloth, the kids manage to get the dye on their clothes. How can I remove it?

A: Pretreat stains with a pre-wash stain remover, and then launder. If the stain remains, mix a solution of 1/4 cup of oxygen bleach or 1/4 cup of chlorine bleach (if safe for the fabric) per gallon of cool water. Soak for 30 minutes. Rinse, and then launder.

Q: Does it really make a difference to use an antibacterial hand soap or body wash?

A: Antibacterial hand soaps and body washes contain an ingredient that kills or controls bacteria that can cause illnesses, odor or skin infections. Unlike plain soaps, these products are designed to leave a very small amount of the antibacterial ingredient on the skin after rinsing. This helps inhibit the growth of bacteria. Antibacterial soaps and washes are available in bar and liquid form. Both forms are equally effective, so the choice is merely a matter of your personal preference.

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