



CleaningMatters

Tips and Trends from the American Cleaning Institute®

March/April 2011

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Calendar of Clean

March is ...

- **Deadline to submit Healthy Schools, Healthy People ... It's a SNAP National Award applications: March 1**
(see SNAP Deadline)
- **National Poison Prevention Week: March 20-26**
(see Clean Ideas)
- **Organize Your Home Office Day: March 8**
(see Step up to Spring Cleaning)
- **Daylight Savings Time Begins/Check Your Batteries Day: March 13**
(see Be a Detector Detective)
- **First Day of Spring: March 20**
(see Step up to Spring Cleaning)

April is ...

- **National Garden Month**
(see Ask Nancy/Tell Nancy)
- **National Stress Awareness Month**
(see Behind the Label: Fragrances)
- **Cleaning for a Reason Week: April 17-23**
(see Clean S.P.O.T.)
- **Drug Take-Back Day: April 30**
(see Clean Ideas)

Step up to Spring Cleaning

Strategies for Cleaning Success

Did you ever think about how the spring-cleaning ritual developed? Before the advent of electricity and a host of other modern conveniences, homes were heated with coal, oil and/or wood, and lit by gas or candlelight. Soot and grime were the natural companions of winter. Once spring arrived, the doors were thrown open, and everything – rugs, furniture, cupboards, curtains and more – was aired out, cleaned out, swept out and scrubbed out.

Although today's centrally heated homes don't collect that intensity of dirt, somehow the winter dingies seem to creep inside. And this year, with challenging weather conditions keeping us indoors all too long, our instincts are to make everything look fresh and bright come that first whiff of spring. Nancy Bock, Vice President of Consumer Education at the American Cleaning Institute® has some recommendations to get you started.

Strategy #1: Clear It Out

Start by getting rid of the things that are needlessly filling up your home.

- **Recycle it.** Even with the availability of reading online, some people still prefer the paper versions. Gather up any newspapers and those magazines no one has ever quite gotten around to reading. If your community also recycles mixed papers, check the regulations and then start a bin where you can toss those papers as you clean.
- **Sell it.** Garage sales, tag sales or consignment shops are a great way to get rid of items that are in excellent condition but that you no longer need. Collect them in one spot, and then, once spring cleaning is done, decide how to dispose of them.



american cleaning institute®
for better living

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Step up to Spring Cleaning (cont.)

Strategies for Cleaning Success

- **Donate it.** Items that are in good condition but no longer fit your lifestyle can be donated to a charity or “freecycled” away. Freecycle is a grassroots, web-based, nonprofit movement of people who are giving and getting stuff for free in their own towns. Each local group is moderated by a volunteer, and membership is free. Visit www.freecycle.org for more information.

Strategy #2: Inventory Your Supplies

Before you start cleaning, make sure you have all the necessary supplies on hand.

The basics should include an all-purpose spray cleaner (for small, washable areas), an all-purpose powder or liquid cleaner (for large washable surfaces like floors and walls), an abrasive cleanser (to remove heavy amounts of soil in small areas), a nonabrasive cleanser (for gentle cleaning on easily scratched surfaces, including porcelain sinks and ceramic tile), chlorine bleach (an effective disinfectant, particularly where mold and mildew are present), glass cleaner, furniture-dusting product (such as a spray and a clean cloth, or a microfiber cloth, mitt or duster) and toilet bowl cleaner.

You may also need to add cleaners specific to your surfaces, such as metal polishes and granite cleaners, or your personal preferences, such as wipes and special-purpose sprays. And don't forget to check your supply of vacuum cleaner bags and trash bags.

Strategy #3: Make a Plan

- **Decide on your cleaning style.** Some people find it more effective to clean one room at a time. Others prefer to group tasks – such as cleaning windows in several rooms at once or leaving all the vacuuming until the end.
- **Prioritize.** If one room at a time is your style, decide on the order. Generally, it's best to do the rooms that need the most work or get the most traffic first. That way, if your cleaning plans get derailed, you can still be proud of what you've accomplished.
- **Consider the big stuff.** Do the curtains need to be laundered? What about comforters, blankets, bed skirts, slipcovers and shower curtains? Are your area rugs and draperies due for professional cleaning? Once these items are removed from the room and on their way to getting cleaned, it will be easier to tackle the rest of the space.

Strategy #4: Recruit Help

It's not necessary to do everything yourself.

- **Enlist family members.** Establish a Spring Cleaning Day. Start early. Assign tasks according to age and ability. Have lunch preplanned – maybe even delivered – so your helpers don't lose momentum. And make it fun. Hide some favorite treats in places that need to be cleaned. Play lively music that keeps everyone's energy up.
- **Pair up with a friend.** If you live alone or family members can't help, find a like-minded friend and clean together – your house in the morning, his/hers in the afternoon. If needed, schedule a second day.
- **Call in the professionals.** If your budget allows, you don't have to do every bit of cleaning yourself. Someone else can come in and wash the windows ... or buff the floors ... or shampoo the carpets ... or clean the upholstery ... or even do the majority of the cleaning after you've removed the clutter.

NewsFlash

For Better Living

New Video Debuts

“For Better Living,” an informative digital presentation from the American Cleaning Institute® (ACI), was unveiled at the 2011 ACI Annual Meeting & Industry Convention, held in late January in Orlando, Florida. Attendees included household and institutional cleaning-product producers and formulators, ingredient suppliers, oleochemical producers, chemical distributors and finished-packaging suppliers from around the world.

“For Better Living” communicates how the cleaning-products industry contributes to better living for consumers and how ACI member companies make positive contributions to society.

The 30-minute video, which features 20 ACI member companies, will be displayed online at www.cleaninginstitute.org beginning in April. It will also be part of ACI’s presence at industry and educational outreach conferences.

SNAP Deadline: March 1

Applications Are Due

If you’ve done the work, don’t miss the deadline!

March 1 is the deadline for applications for the 2011 Healthy Schools, Healthy People, It’s a SNAP national awards program.

This innovative, self-directed hand-hygiene program is designed especially for middle school students. The program allows teachers and school administrators to easily integrate handwashing activities into the curriculum and allows students to create fun handwashing awareness projects that could improve student and staff health and earn national recognition.

The top classroom award is an all-expenses-paid trip to Washington, DC for up to three representatives, a special awards ceremony in the nation’s capital and a special celebration for the entire class. The two runners-up will each receive \$250 for their schools and an award plaque.

To apply, submit your school information, a one-page summary of your class project and supporting information such as photos, newspaper articles or videos. (Please, no more than 4 pages!)

Send your project and complete school information to:

Healthy Schools, Healthy People

1331 L Street NW, Suite 650

Washington, D.C. 20005

Fax: 202-347-4110

Email: snap@cleaninginstitute.org

Applications will be evaluated on originality, creativity, ability to replicate results, evidence of teamwork, and program impact. Visit www.itsasnap.org for additional information.



Bedbugs, Be Gone

How to Deal with Bedbugs

When moms of yesteryear said, “Sleep tight ... don’t let the bedbugs bite,” we gave it nary a thought. But today that bedtime wish has become more like a nighttime caution. Bedbugs are back – with a vengeance. These unpleasant parasites look to resting humans and animals as their food source. Dirt and unsanitary conditions do not play a part in attracting these pests. Rather, they are drawn to the carbon dioxide and body heat we emit. Once they’ve had their meal, they scurry off and hide, an attribute that makes them difficult to control.

Signs of Bedbugs

Despite their propensity to hide, bedbugs can sometimes be seen by the naked eye. Adult bugs are 1/8"-1/4" long, tan to reddish in color, with an oval shape that resembles an apple seed. Because they are translucent until maturity, young bedbugs are harder to spot. Signs of bedbugs include tiny bloodstains, eggs and live or dead insects on bedding, mattresses, headboards and other fixtures that are close to the bed, such as night tables, curtains and blinds. You may also notice a sweet, pungent odor.

If you are bitten, red welts or a rash on the body will also indicate their presence. Since bedbugs have not been shown to transmit disease, the main side effect of this rash is extreme discomfort. Washing with soap and water can help ease the reaction. Avoid scratching. It will make the reaction much worse. If you continue to experience discomfort, consult your doctor or pharmacist.

Preventing Infestation

Before DDT was banned in 1972, bedbugs were easy to control – and to eliminate. Today, the process is much more challenging. If caught in the very early stages of infestation, it is possible to eliminate them. At later stages, or if early intervention doesn’t work, professional extermination is usually required.

Preventing infestation is the best form of bedbug control. Nancy Bock, Vice President of Consumer Education at the American Cleaning Institute® offers these suggestions:

- Usually bedbugs come into the home by hitching a ride on your luggage or personal items. When staying in a hotel, check the room, particularly the bedding and around the headboard, for signs of infestation. Change rooms immediately if you see any sign of the insects.
- Even if the room has no signs of bedbugs, do not put your clothing or luggage directly on the bed. Don’t put your luggage on the floor, either. Use the metal luggage rack or put it on top of the desk.
- Don’t accept secondhand furniture or bedding unless you are certain that the source is bedbug-free. Antique furniture should also be carefully examined.

If Infestation Appears

Before calling a professional exterminator, here are some steps to try:

- If you have clothing that has become infested, undress on a hard-surface floor. Wipe the floor to capture any bedbugs that have fallen off the clothing.
- Place the clothing in a plastic bag so it can go directly into the washing machine without the bugs escaping. Wash and dry them at the hottest settings that are safe for the fabrics.
- Infested bedding should also go directly into a plastic bag and then into the washing machine and dryer.
- Vacuum bedding and furniture thoroughly. Use a crevice tool to get into all the hard-to-reach places. Vacuum floorboards, the wall behind the bed; take the bed apart and vacuum the headboard and the bed frame. If luggage has been exposed to bedbugs, give it, too, a thorough vacuuming. Remove the vacuum bag, seal it up and dispose of it.



Be a Detector Detective

Tips for Keeping Smoke and CO Detectors on Active Duty

Daylight Savings Time begins on March 13. So, while you're making the rounds that day to reset your clocks, take some time to give your smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors a checkup too. According to the National Fire Protection Association, more than 66% of home-fire deaths that occurred between 2003 and 2006 were in homes without a working smoke alarm. A working smoke alarm significantly increases your chances of surviving a deadly home fire.

If you have battery-operated detectors, the batteries should be changed a minimum of once a year; twice a year is even better. It's easy to remember to do this bit of home maintenance if you schedule it to correspond with the arrival of Daylight Savings Time in the spring and the switch back to Standard Time in the fall.

Battery replacement isn't the only issue, says Nancy Bock, Vice President of Consumer Education at the American Cleaning Institute®. Cleaning these alarms is important too. If dust particles settle inside your detectors, they can easily compromise the response, either by setting off a false alarm or by causing a delay. It is important to always follow the manufacturer's directions when cleaning your detector.

In most cases, start by removing the detector from the ceiling or wall. Set it on a table and remove the batteries. Using a clean, dry cloth, gently dust the battery compartment. Install new batteries and close the compartment. To remove dust particles and cobwebs, gently vacuum the case, using the wand or brush attachment. Do not use any type of liquid or spray cleaner. However, if your alarm has a removable cover, you can clean it with a solution of water and hand-dishwashing detergent. Rinse and thoroughly dry the cover before replacing it.

Check the age of your detectors. If the alarm is old, the sensor response could be delayed, or it might not even respond at all. Despite what many people think, detectors are not designed to last a lifetime. Replace any that are more than 10 years old. If there is a residue of grease and grime on your detector that can't be removed by vacuuming, that's also a sign that it's time to replace it.

If your detectors are hardwired as part of a security system, check with the installation company for their cleaning recommendations.

Become an ACI Facebook Friend

Two for One Cleaning Updates

Like the song says, "You gotta have friends!" American Cleaning Institute® invites you to become one of its friends on Facebook.

If you find the information supplied in Cleaning Matters helpful (and our recent survey of readers indicated that you do, indeed), then you'll definitely want to be our Facebook friend. In addition to the bimonthly information you receive through Cleaning Matters, Facebook will be your portal to more frequent updates on cleaning topics.

The link to our Facebook page is <http://www.facebook.com/AmericanCleaningInstitute>. We hope to see you there!

Help Us Improve

Take a few moments to complete our [survey](#) to tell us how you use *Cleaning Matters*® and what you think about it.



Behind the Label: Fragrance Science and Safety

Making Sense of Scents

Fragrance is used in a variety of everyday products ranging from household and personal care products to fine fragrances, home fragrance, cleaning products, hand soaps, laundry products and air fresheners. In the majority of consumer packaged goods products, fragrance represents less than 1% of the total finished product formulation. However, that small percentage is vitally important to the product's identity, functionality and consumer appeal.

Fragrance can play an important role in cleaning products, observes Nancy Bock, Vice President of Consumer Education at the American Cleaning Institute®. It can make a mundane task more pleasant, particularly when the fragrance is one that has high user appeal. It can also help to reduce our general stress levels. In fact, a significant relationship between positive mood state and health is now emerging. According to Susan Schiffman, M.D., professor of medical psychology at Duke University, "Although the world will continue to become more technological, our biological nature will always be at the core of our lives. A life without olfactory pleasure would be an empty one."

Realizing the beneficial role fragrance plays in our lives and the popularity of fragranced products, it is important to understand the extensive testing and safety standards the fragrance industry requires.

IFRA, the International Fragrance Association, is the official representative body of the fragrance industry worldwide. Its main purpose is to ensure the safety of fragrance materials through a dedicated science program. This focus on fragrance safety helps both the consumer and the environment. Fragrance manufacturer members must subscribe to the IFRA Code of Practice, which applies to the manufacture and handling of all

fragrance materials, for all types of applications and contains the comprehensive set of IFRA Standards. Abiding by the IFRA Code of Practice is a prerequisite for all fragrance supplier companies that are members of IFRA (either directly or through national associations). IFRA membership and adherence to their strict Code of Practice, is intended to assure the safe use of fragrance ingredients in products we use on our bodies and in our homes every day.

Additional fragrance science and safety assurance is provided by RIFM. The Research Institute for Fragrance Materials, Inc. (RIFM) generates, evaluates and distributes scientific data on the safety assessment of fragrance raw materials found in perfumes, cosmetics, shampoos, detergents, air fresheners, candles and other personal and household products. The RIFM Database is the most comprehensive source worldwide of physical-chemical, toxicological and eco-toxicological data, literature and information on safety evaluation associated with known fragrance and flavor materials.

Fragrance science and safety is a primary focus for responsible fragrance manufacturers worldwide. Consumers can depend upon the credibility of scientifically valid data, proven safety perspectives based on years of experience, best research practices that reflect the integrity of the industry; as well as definitive research conducted for decades by independent scientists. RIFM's independent Panel of Experts, internationally known dermatologists, pathologists, toxicologists, reproductive, environmental and respiratory scientists, advises RIFM on its strategic approach, reviews protocols and evaluates all scientific findings. The fragrance industry steadfastly pursues its focus on fragrance safety, while the fragrance ingredients it responsibly produces continue to enhance everyday experiences in our lives.



Clean S.P.O.T.

Cleaning For A Reason



The American Cleaning Institute® (ACI) is a proud supporter of the Cleaning For A Reason™ Foundation and their work to sustain cleanliness for women undergoing treatment for cancer. “A clean home environment is important.

It is even more important to women with cancer,” says Nancy Bock, VP Consumer Education and Board member of the Cleaning For A Reason Foundation. We want women to focus on their health, while the cleaning services focus on their homes. That is why ACI has partnered with this group to help educate the public about the vital link between health and hygiene. We are doing our part to help families sustain cleanliness when loved ones are undergoing treatment, and we hope you will too.

Help the Cause

We are urging everyone to make it a point to learn more about this organization and participate at some level.

- **If you employ a residential cleaning service to take care of your home, download this bookmark** (<http://www.cleaninginstitute.org/assets/1/AssetManager/Cleaning%20For%20A%20Reason%20Bookmark.pdf>) to share with them, and encourage them to visit www.cleaningforareason.org or call (877) 337-3348.

- **If you are a professional residential maid service who is insured and bonded**, participate in the foundation. Your company must agree to take two patients at a time and offer four free general cleanings – one a month for four months as a way to give back to your community. For more information, fill out the online form at <http://www.cleaningforareason.org/cleaningservice.html> and a representative for Cleaning For A Reason will contact you.
- **If you are a concerned individual**, a small monthly donation will sponsor a maid service and two cancer patients per month. There are also donation options for those who wish to sponsor more cleaning visits per month. Visit <http://cleaningforareason.org/sponsor.html> for details.
- **If you are a business or professional organization**, you can become a Friend of the Foundation through the Corporate Sponsor Program. Visit <http://www.cleaningforareason.org/friends/images/Friends.pdf> for details.
- **If you are a cancer patient in need of cleaning services**, visit <http://www.cleaningforareason.org/cancerpatients.html>.

With more partners, more patients will be served.

Ask Nancy

Tell Nancy



Remember when you were in school and show-and-tell was a favorite classroom activity? Well, that's just what we'd like to do with this section of *Cleaning Matters*®. We'd love to hear more from our readers! Write something on our [Facebook](#) wall, direct message us on [Twitter](#), text us or send us an [email](#) with your cleaning crisis or dirty dilemma.

Q: Will a bar of soap last longer if you let it air out or if you keep it closed up in a soap dish with a lid?

A: It's preferable to let it air out. If you keep your bar soap in a closed container, the soap will stay wet. As a result, it can become mushy and dissolve quicker.

Tell Nancy!

Facebook:

[http://www.facebook.com/
AmericanCleaningInstitute](http://www.facebook.com/AmericanCleaningInstitute)

Twitter:

<http://twitter.com/#!/CleanInstitute>

Text:

202-617-1307

Email:

education@cleaninginstitute.org

Q: I suspect that our new backyard has some poison ivy. If I wear gloves, long sleeves and long pants to protect me, how do I clean these clothes when I'm finished gardening so I don't spread the poison ivy?

A: You are right to be concerned. Poison ivy produces a resin called urushiol. This resin is the culprit that triggers allergic rash reactions in most people. When it remains on unwashed clothing, it is still active. Avoid touching your clothes with bare hands or letting them brush against your bare skin. Take off the garden gloves carefully, using a clean cloth to remove them. If possible, before removing the rest of your clothes, put on a pair of disposable rubber gloves. Then, take the clothes off carefully, putting them in a large plastic bag, along with the cloth you used to remove your garden gloves and the garden gloves, too. Discard the rubber gloves.

Wash the clothes using laundry detergent and the hottest water temperature that's safe for the fabric. Use enough water to allow the clothes to agitate freely. Dump the clothes into the washing machine directly from the plastic bag, being careful not to let them brush against the outside of the machine. Handling it carefully, discard the plastic bag. If you wish, you can wash other items along with these clothes. The urushiol will be suspended in the water and won't transfer to unexposed items.

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



Clean Ideas

Putting Poisons in Their Place

Tips to Minimize Poison Emergencies in Your Home

National Poison Prevention Week, March 20-26, was created to build public awareness of the dangers posed by common toxins. According to the 2008 Annual Report of the American Association of Poison Control Centers' National Poison Data System, approximately 2.5 million people were exposed to poisons. Children younger than 6 years accounted for half of all human exposures and ingestion was the route of exposure in nearly 80% of all cases. Many of the poisoning substances are found in the home, making diligence on the home front an important line of defense against accidental poisonings.

Here are some ways to safeguard family members and pets from accidental poisoning:

- **Install Child-Safety Locks** on cabinets that house cleaning supplies, medicines, cosmetics, chemicals and other poisons. Never assume a cabinet is too high for a curious, climbing toddler.
- **Read and Follow the Product-Label Directions.** Pay particular attention to products whose labels include the words "Caution," "Warning," "Danger" or "Poison."
- **Discard Medications** that are no longer needed or that have outlived their expiration date. Do not flush them down the sink or toilet. Doing so can contaminate our water supplies. One option is to take pills out of their containers and discard them in the trash. However, this still creates a potential environmental problem and can be a potential danger to curious children and pets. A better option is to participate in local programs that collect old and unwanted medications. Visit the Take-Back Network website (www.takebacknetwork.com) to find a program in your area, or contact your state or local waste management authority.
- **Keep All Household Products in Their Original Packages.** Packaging includes useful first-aid information in the event of accidental exposure or ingestion. If you purchase these products in bulk quantities, buy a smaller size of the same product and refill this container, as needed.
- **Discard Empty Cleaning Supply Containers, Including Detergent Containers.** Do not use them for storage of any other materials, particularly those intended for human consumption.
- **Thoroughly Wash** any utensils used in dispensing or measuring medicines.
- **Wash Your Hands** after cleaning-product usage.
- **Use Child-Resistant Packaging Properly by Closing the Container Securely** after each use. Remember, however, that this type of packaging is "child-resistant" – not "child-proof." It is not a substitute for keeping products securely out of reach of young children. Be aware that poisons can be inhaled, as well as ingested.
- **Don't Mix Household Cleaning Products.** This could release harmful vapors or cause other chemical reactions that can have dangerous results.
- **Install Carbon Monoxide Detectors in your home.** The best places for a CO detector are near bedrooms and close to furnaces. Since carbon monoxide is a deadly, but odorless, substance, working CO detectors should be essential equipment in your home.
- **Post the Poison Control Center Phone Number** (1-800-222-1222) by every phone in your home and enter it into your cell phone's contact list.