



CLEANLINESS FACTS

TIPS AND TRENDS FROM THE SOAP AND DETERGENT ASSOCIATION

475 Park Avenue South New York, New York 10016

DISPOSAL DIRECTIONS

Safely Discarding Household Cleaning Products

Thoughtlessly discarding an unused cleaning product is at odds with modern America's concern with the environment, according to The Soap and Detergent Association. Using the product up is the most efficient way to answer the disposal question. If you can't use it, try to find someone who can. If this isn't possible, proper disposal is the next choice.

To insure safe disposal, check the label. Some cleaning products require special handling. If no instructions are given, it is safe to dispose of most cleaning products the same way they are used. However, some should be treated as hazardous waste. See page 2 for specific information.

Water-soluble products (used or rinsed with water for cleaning) can be poured down the drain. This includes all-purpose cleaners, bleaches, dishwashing and laundry products, toilet bowl cleaners and water-based metal cleaners and polishes. Run the water when discarding. Water-soluble aerosol products, such as spray starches and tub-and-tile cleaners, can also be discarded by spraying them down the drain with running water. Never mix cleaning products, even during disposal, as certain combinations may release dangerous gases.

With down-the-drain disposal, these cleaning products will end up at a municipal sewage treatment plant or a household septic system, both of which are equipped to safely handle them. Water-soluble cleaning products are formulated to be treated in these systems and then safely released into the environment.

Solid cleaning products, such as soap bars, rinse agents, soap pads and towelettes, should be disposed in the trash.

Solvent-based products - i.e. ones that are not mixed or rinsed with water - should be



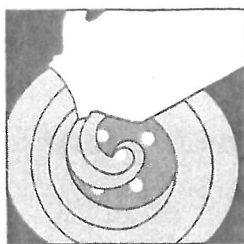
TABLE OF CONTENTS

March/April 1993

DISPOSAL DIRECTIONS Safely Discarding Household Cleaning Products	1
CLEANING PRODUCT DISPOSAL CHART	2
ALLERGIES AND YOUR HOME Keeping Sneezing Under Control	3
BLANKET CARE Spring Cleaning in the Bedroom	3
MISCELLANY Reduce Risk of Bathroom Falls Carpet Cleaning Goes Deep Stain Detective Prevent Child Drownings in the Home	4 4 4 4
Q&A SDA Answers Your Questions	5
WHAT'S NEW?	5
"KEEP IT CLEAN" BRIEFS	6

disposed as household hazardous waste. Contact the municipal government for local procedures. This category includes spot removers, some metal and furniture cleaners, and any product labeled as flammable. When in doubt about how to dispose of a product, call the toll-free number on the label. A detailed cleaning product disposal chart is given on the next page. ■





DISPOSAL OF HOUSEHOLD CLEANING PRODUCTS

These guidelines are provided by product manufacturers and are consistent with the way products are developed and tested for safe disposal. Some communities have regulations for handling wastes; check your local waste management/recycling facility and follow their regulations. The best disposal method is to use up the product or give it away to someone who will. If this is not possible, read the label for disposal directions. If there are none, use the following methods to dispose of any left-over product. For down-the-drain disposal, flush with water. Do not mix products when disposing.

PRODUCT	DISPOSAL METHOD
■ LAUNDRY PRODUCTS	
Bleaches Chlorine (sodium hypochlorite) (liquids, powders) Oxygen (liquids, powders)	Down -the-drain
Bluing (liquids, powders)	Down -the-drain
Detergents (liquids, powders)	Down -the-drain
Fabric softeners (liquids, sheets, packets)	Liquids: down-the-drain Sheets, packets: in the trash
Presoak products—used to presoak garments before laundering (powders)	Down -the-drain
Prewash soil and stain removers—used on washable fabrics before they are laundered. Water soluble.* (sprays, aerosols, sticks)	Sprays, aerosols: down-the-drain Sticks: in the trash
Soaps (powders, bars)	Powders: down-the-drain Bars: in the trash
Spot removers—used on drycleanable fabrics, not used in the laundry. Solvent based.** (pastes, aerosols)	Save for household hazardous waste collection
Starches, fabric finishes, sizings (liquids, powders, aerosols)	Down-the-drain
Water softeners (powders, liquids)	Down-the-drain
■ DISHWASHING PRODUCTS	
Automatic dishwashing detergents (liquids, powders, gels)	Down-the-drain
Film and spot removers (powders)	Down-the-drain
Hand dishwashing detergents (liquids)	Down-the-drain
Rinse agents (liquids, solids, disks)	Liquids: down-the-drain Solids, disks: in the trash
■ HARD SURFACE CLEANERS	
All-purpose cleaners Abrasive cleansers (liquids, powders) Non-abrasive cleansers (liquids, powders, sprays, towelettes)	Down-the-drain Liquids, powders, sprays: down-the-drain Towelettes: in the trash
Disinfectant cleaners (liquids)	Down-the-drain
Soap scouring pads	In the trash

PRODUCT	DISPOSAL METHOD
■ SPECIALTY CLEANING PRODUCTS	
Carpet cleaners (concentrates, liquids, sprays, aerosols)	Down-the-drain
Drain openers (liquids, crystals)	Liquids: down-the-drain Crystals: down-the-drain following use instructions on the label
Floor care products—water soluble* (liquids, pastes)	Liquids: down-the-drain Pastes: in the trash
Floor care products—solvent based** (liquids, pastes)	Save for household hazardous waste collection
Furniture cleaners and polishes—water soluble* (liquids, sprays, aerosols, pastes)	Liquids, sprays, aerosols: down-the-drain Pastes: in the trash
Furniture cleaners and polishes—solvent based** (liquids, sprays, pastes, aerosols)	Save for household hazardous waste collection
Glass cleaners (sprays, aerosols, towelettes)	Sprays, aerosols: down-the-drain Towelettes: in the trash
Metal cleaners and polishes—water soluble* (liquids, pastes)	Liquids: down-the-drain Pastes: in the trash
Metal cleaners and polishes—solvent based** (liquids, pastes)	Save for household hazardous waste collection
Oven cleaners (aerosols)	Save for household hazardous waste collection
Toilet bowl cleaners (liquids, crystals, solids)	Liquids, crystals: down-the-drain Solids: in the trash
Tub, tile and sink cleaners (sprays, liquids, aerosols)	Down-the-drain
Upholstery cleaners (liquids, powders, sprays, aerosols)	Down-the-drain
■ OTHER CLEANING AIDS	
Ammonia (liquid)	Down-the-drain
Baking soda (powder)	Down-the-drain
Borax (powder)	Down-the-drain
Disinfectants (liquids, sprays, aerosols)	Down-the-drain
Hand soaps (liquids, powders, bars)	Liquids, powders: down-the-drain Bars: in the trash
*Water soluble means the product is used with water for cleaning.	
**Solvent based means the product is not used with water for cleaning. Any cleaner stating on the label that it is flammable—"Flammable", "Keep Away From Heat", etc.—is probably solvent based.	

ALLERGIES AND YOUR HOME **Keeping Sneezing Under Control**

For some people, house dust is merely an annoying reminder that it's time to do some cleaning. For others, house dust is a health enemy that can cause sneezing, a runny nose, even chronic bronchitis and asthma.

Carpets, bedding and upholstered furniture are the favorite resting places for dust mites, insects so small that ten of them could fit on the period at the end of this sentence. According to information compiled by The Soap and Detergent Association, approximately one-half of all allergy sufferers are sensitive to the fecal matter these mites emit. Dust mites can be the direct cause of allergies or they can irritate the membranes, increasing the severity of other types of allergies. Keeping the dust under control will help keep allergies under control.

To survive, mites require a certain level of moisture. Lowering the relative humidity to below 50% will help reduce their numbers. A double-filtered ventilator or an air conditioner, particularly in pollen season, may help. Be sure the clothes dryer is vented to the outdoors. Avoid humidifiers - they add extra moisture.

Use cleaning methods that remove the dust, not scatter it around; use a dusting cloth with a furniture cleaner instead of a feather duster. A vacuum cleaner with an enclosed bay will stir up less dust.

Vacuum upholstered furniture, cushions, pillows and rugs at least twice weekly. Wall-to-wall carpets should be vacuumed more frequently. Choose window treatments that are easy to keep clean, like washable curtains and roller shades. Mattresses should be turned and vacuumed every few months. If pillows are not washable, put them in the dryer on the air cycle to eliminate the dust and fluff the pillows. All other bedding should be washed frequently.

The household furnace may be another source of dust contamination. Filters on forced air heating systems should be changed at least every two months. If a family member is very allergic, and the hot air system is not filtered, seal off the furnace openings in the sleeping room and use an electric heater for warmth.■

BLANKET CARE **Spring Cleaning in the Bedroom**

The approach of spring means it's time to clean and store winter's warming blankets. To help consumers, The Soap and Detergent Association has put together the following blanket care guidelines.

For all blankets, read and follow the manufacturers care label instructions, if available. Pretreat any heavily soiled areas or spots. For best results, wash each blanket separately. When drying it may be necessary to periodically rearrange large blankets so they dry evenly.

Electric blankets should never be drycleaned because the chemicals may ruin the wiring. Instead, machine wash them using a gentle cycle to avoid damaging the wires. Disconnect the control from the blanket and pin a corner of the blanket over the plug to protect it. Add laundry detergent to the wash water and allow it to briefly agitate until it's dissolved. Then stop the washer, add the blanket and allow it to soak for about 15 minutes. After soaking, agitate the blanket for about two minutes, then start the washer and complete the wash cycle. Do not dryer dry unless the care label recommends it. Instead, hang the blanket over two lines or lay it flat to dry.

Nonwoven blankets comprised of synthetic fibers that are pressed together and heat bonded should be machine washed using the gentle cycle. Use a high water level and warm water setting. Air dry.

A Vellux blanket is a specific type of nonwoven blanket with synthetic fibers bonded by adhesives to a foam base and requires some additional care. Use warm water, a gentle setting and a short agitation time (five to eight minutes). Tumble dry on low heat.

For wool blankets, machine wash in cold water on the delicate cycle, do not use chlorine bleach. Tumble dry on low.

Blankets made from heat-sensitive synthetic fibers, such as modacrylic, Saran and PVC, should be machine washed in cold water and tumble dried on a low temperature.■





MISCELLANY

Reduce Risk of Bathroom Falls

Falls are the leading cause of serious injuries in the bathroom, and children and the elderly are especially vulnerable. When soap and water are introduced to the smooth surfaces of tubs, shower stalls and tile floors, the risk is increased. The Soap and Detergent Association offers some safety tips to help prevent bathroom falls.

Towel rings and bars, as well as soap dishes and shower curtains, should be securely anchored in case someone grabs them for support. Horizontal or L-shaped grab bars should be installed around bathtubs and showers. These should be securely fastened into wall studs or other structural supports and be capable of withstanding a constant load of 300 pounds. Shower doors should be made of safety glazing material, such as tempered, wired or laminated glass or shatter-resistant plastic. Soap should be returned to the soap dish when not in use; even small slivers are very slippery. Spilled shampoos, lotions and water should be wiped up immediately. A nightlight, a bath rug with a rubberized backing, and nonslip rubber mats or safety strips/decals in tubs and showers are other good preventative measures.

Carpet Cleaning Goes Deep

Consumers are becoming conscious of the need for a carpet cleaning system that goes beyond surface vacuuming, reports The Soap and Detergent Association. As a result, the deep-cleaning carpet machines are gaining in popularity.

The deep-cleaning floor-care market includes upright and canister style machines in two basic styles. Hook-up units connect to a water faucet. Self-contained units are those that carry their own water supply, which allows for more flexibility when using the machine. Many of the latter retail for under \$150.

Consumers who own deep cleaning machines are concerned with regular, high maintenance cleaning, cleaning in high-traffic areas, or regularly occurring child or pet stains.

Stain Detective

Mysterious garment stains of an undetermined source require a bit of detective work before they can be removed.

Check the location. It may be a clue to the source. For example, explains The Soap and Detergent Association, stains around the neckline and shoulders are often due to hair care products. Pretreat using a liquid laundry detergent or a prewash product.

Sometimes stains are scattered in a small area. These bunched stains often occur when the item is piled on the floor, in the laundry basket or wash tub before laundering. Try to locate the source of the stain, then treat accordingly. Gray or black pinched stains may appear during laundering. Treat these stains with a prewash product. If they appear at the end of a wash cycle, the garment may be getting caught by the agitator. To prevent this, avoid overloading. If they appear after dryer drying, the culprit may be a misaligned dryer tumbler. If this seems likely, call a service technician.

Prevent Child Drownings in the Home

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission reports that since 1973 more than 500 children have drowned in the home in small amounts of water. More than 300 children drowned in bathtubs, basins, showers and jetted bathtubs, in as little as two inches of water. Many children drowned in toilet bowls, usually after falling in head first, as well as in diaper pails.

Of particular concern are five-gallon buckets in which more than 200 children drowned since 1984. One eleven-month-old drowned in a half-filled bucket when her mother left the room for a few minutes. Another was discovered in the bathtub, head first, in a bucket of soaking clothes. A third drowned, again head first, in a bucket of water her mother had prepared for mopping.

Toddlers are particularly prone to head-first falls, warns The Soap and Detergent Association, and should never, under any circumstances, be left alone around a bucket that contains even a few inches of water. ■

Q & A

SDA Answers Your Questions

Q: What is a surfactant and why is it important for detergents?

A: A surfactant (surface active agent) is a wetting agent which lowers water's surface tension. Surface tension is what causes water to bead up on hard surfaces and prevents fabrics from easily becoming wet. By lowering surface tension, a surfactant allows water to spread out, penetrate fabrics more easily and remove many of the water-soluble soils.

The surfactant is perhaps the most important ingredient in a synthetic detergent. Detergents may contain more than one kind of surfactant. These surfactants differ in their ability to remove certain types of soil, in their effectiveness on different fabrics and in their response to water hardness. Surfactants are classified by their ionic (electrical charge) properties in the water.

Q: What is the difference between antimicrobial and antibacterial hand soaps?

A: An antimicrobial product kills a broad category of microbes including bacteria, yeasts, molds, viruses and protozoa. Antibacterial is a more specific term used in reference to bacteria. Antibacterial products will kill multiple types and strains of bacteria and also yeast.

Regular soaps remove germs by washing them away. Antimicrobial/antibacterial soaps combine these same removal properties with the ability to kill germs. These products usually remove more germs than regular soaps and inhibit the growth of germs after rinsing.

Soaps that are labeled antimicrobial and/or antibacterial are regulated by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), are required to meet stringent regulations, and must list all active ingredients.

Q: Can I add water to my liquid hand soap to make it last longer?

A: No. Adding water will contaminate the product. This reduces its effectiveness and promotes bacterial growth. The bacteria can cause discoloration and a bad odor. ■

WHAT'S NEW?

Bears and mini-bunnies are invading the bakeware market. The Mini-Bunny Pan, made of anodized aluminum, bakes six individual bunny cakes or muffins at one time. Little girls will love birthday cakes created with Ballerina Bear, an aluminum cake pan that holds one cake mix. Also new is the Home Run Hitter pan, shaped like a young baseball player, and designed to hold one cake mix.

(Wilton Enterprises; 2240 W. 75th Street; Woodridge, IL 60517)

A versatile, utilitarian knife that never needs sharpening is high on the wish list of most consumers. A new cutlery item, the All Purpose Kitchen Knife, is designed to meet that need. Its never-needs-sharpening blade is constructed of stainless steel. The handle is made from non-slip Krayton plastic. To add to its easy maintenance, the knife is dishwasher safe.

(Fiskars Manufacturing Corp.; 7811 W. Stewart Ave.; P.O. Box 8027; Wausau, WI 54402)

The new Deco-White translucent electric cooktop combines convenience with a sleek, contemporary appearance. The electric elements glow red when in use, transferring radiant heat quickly. The elements cycle on and off to maintain selected heat settings. For easy maintenance, the ceramic cooktop is scratch resistant, smooth and flush to the counter. The manufacturer's warranty includes one year free repair, parts and labor; two years free parts; and five years free parts on surface heating elements.

(Maytag Company; One Dependability Square; Newton, IA 50208) ■





"KEEP IT CLEAN" BRIEFS

Fiction: It's ok to ignore a care label that states, "wash separately" or "wash with similar colors."

Fact: Garments with these care instructions can be expected to lose a certain amount of color in the first few washings. The excess dyes from these garments may migrate to other garments washed in the same load causing colored stains. Always wash garments with these instructions separately or with garments of the same colors to avoid dye staining.

Fiction: Adding a fabric softener in the wash cycle is as effective as adding it to the rinse cycle.

Fact: Other laundry products may react or interfere with a rinse-added fabric softener, and possibly cause staining. It's important to add the softener only to the final rinse without any other product, even a bluing or water softener.

Stains caused by dryer-added fabric softeners are colorless, oily or greasy looking spots. If possible, pretreat the stain before drying the garment as dryer heat can set the stains. Wet the stained area, then rub with a bar soap. Rinse, then rewash the garment.

To prevent messy soap residue in the soap dish, fold a washcloth and place it in the bottom of the dish. Keep the soap on the cloth to absorb the suds, and simply wash the cloth when it becomes saturated.

Use a chlorine bleach solution to kill germs from raw foods such as chicken, fish and meat. Wash any surface that touches the raw food, including knives, food processor blades and cutting boards. Then, soak the item for two minutes in a solution of one sink full of water plus 1/8 cup of unscented chlorine bleach. Rinse; air dry. ■

This newsletter is not copyrighted. The content may be used at will, with or without credit to The Soap and Detergent Association. Mention of product names or manufacturers does not constitute an endorsement or a guarantee of performance or safety of such products by the Association and/or its member companies. This paper is made from recycled fibers that include post-consumer waste.

The Soap and Detergent Association
475 Park Avenue South
New York, New York 10016

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

