

HEALTHY, WEALTHY & WISE

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"Optimism is the faith that leads to achievement. Nothing can be done without hope and confidence." - Helen Keller

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Do You Breathe Easy at Home?

How to Control Indoor Air Pollution

Pollution. We use the word to describe harmful or poisonous substances introduced into an environment. Water pollution, ground pollution, noise pollution, and air pollution are examples we most commonly relate to the outdoor environment. So it may surprise you to find that the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) published reports that indoor air is 2-5 and in some cases up to 100 times more polluted than the air outside.

This article will give you some recommendations to make your indoor air cleaner, healthier and safer. But first, the basics...

What is "Air"?

Air is a mixture of gases that make up Earth's atmosphere. The part of the atmosphere that contains the right mixture of gases to support life contains nitrogen and oxygen, as well as trace amounts of argon, carbon dioxide, helium, neon and other gases. Air also contains variable amounts of water vapor. We refer to the amount of suspended water vapor as humidity.

Humidity Plays an Important Role in Indoor Air Quality

The American Society of Heating, Refrigeration and Air-Conditioning Engineers (ASHRAE) recommends maintaining indoor relative humidity levels between 30% and 50% for human health and comfort. Higher humidity can create an environment where microbes can flourish and create an unsanitary condition.

In addition, higher humidity can result in condensation of water on surfaces. This can hold soils and organic matter, creating a perfect incubator for mold, which can exacerbate asthma and allergies.



Air Suspends Particles

Most airborne particles are harmless. However, others can cause problems, particularly for those with asthma, allergies or immune disorders. There are four keys to keeping your indoor air clean and healthy: exclude, capture, clean and control.

Exclude - Keep contaminants out

Keeping contaminants out of the home is challenging because most airborne particles are tiny and can be everywhere. Pollen, carbon, mold spores, organic matter, insect matter, car exhaust, and plain old dirt enter the home, transported on air currents, clothing and shoes.

Reduce entry by keeping your doors and windows shut, removing shoes when entering and immediately changing your clothing after dusty activities like yard work.

There are other contaminants that originate from within the home. Pet and human dander, food particles, dust mites and their feces, cooking gases, sprays, chemicals, cleaning agents and many other particulates combine to reduce overall indoor air quality. Controlling these can be tricky, because they result from every day living activities. Your best defense is to capture, clean and control them.

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Grandma's Chicken Noodle Soup

Ingredients:

- 2 1/2 cups wide egg noodles
- 1 teaspoon vegetable oil
- 12 cups chicken broth
- 1 1/2 tablespoons salt
- 1 teaspoon poultry seasoning
- 1 cup chopped celery
- 1 cup chopped onion
- 1/3 cup cornstarch
- 1/4 cup water

Directions:

1. Bring a large pot of lightly salted water to a boil. Add egg noodles and oil, and boil for 8 minutes, or until tender. Drain, and rinse under cool running water.
2. In a large saucepan or Dutch oven, combine broth, salt, and poultry seasoning. Bring to a boil. Stir in celery and onion. Reduce heat, cover, and simmer 15 minutes.
3. In a small bowl, mix cornstarch and water together until cornstarch is completely dissolved. Gradually add to soup, stirring constantly. Stir in noodles and chicken, and heat through.

recipe courtesy allrecipes.com

► Continued from cover

Capture - filter and contain that which enters

When airborne particles enter your home, they remain suspended for a period of time. Large and dense particles drop out of the air and settle onto surfaces. Smaller, lighter particles remain suspended longer - some nearly indefinitely - and are best removed by air filtration devices and the filter on your home's HVAC system.

Pay attention to the filters you use. Use high quality pleated filters. Don't buy based on price alone. Get filters that are rated MERV 7 or 8. Higher MERV ratings may place excessive restriction on your ventilation system, requiring a change in configuration. Talk to an HVAC professional for more information about how to improve filtration on your ventilation system.

Clean - remove pollutants from surfaces

Eventually, particles settle on surfaces such as floors, furniture, counters, window sills, shelves and walls. Vacuuming and dusting

removes most of the particles, but make sure that your vacuum cleaner has good filtration too.

Hard surfaces can be cleaned with electrostatic dusters or dust cloths that attract and hold particles, or by wiping hard surfaces with a damp cloth and wet mopping floors. Other surfaces such as carpet, area rugs and upholstery will require periodic professional cleaning to remove accumulated soils and pollutants.

Control - maintain equipment, humidity levels and filters

Proper maintenance is important. Ensure your vacuum cleaner, AC unit, range hood and other ventilation equipment are working properly. Clean or replace furnace filters at recommended intervals; usually monthly depending on the type of filter and environmental conditions.

The Clean Force Company can help you breathe easier indoors with regularly scheduled professional carpet and upholstery cleaning. Call us today to set up your clean and healthy maintenance program.

Making Playgrounds Safer

If you have a child who has recently headed back to school, take some time to inspect the school playground and outdoor activity areas. The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission reports there are about 20 playground-related fatalities each year, and over 200,000 children suffer injuries on a playground annually. Eighty-one percent of all playground injuries occur as a result of a fall.

One proven method for reducing these injuries is by installing softer ground coverings. However, it is estimated that as many as 92 percent of American playgrounds do not have adequate ground cover.

One innovative, non-toxic surface is made of shredded and recycled tires. This material outperforms all other surface materials in impact absorption. The material can be produced in a variety of colors and lasts for up to 50 years, saving in maintenance costs for schools.

If your child's playground has a hard, dangerous surface, take the time to talk to your school official, requesting that a material such as recycled tires be used to replace the ground cover. It is a good idea to educate other parents and teachers on ways the playground can be made as safe as possible, starting from the ground up.



Top 5 Financial Planning Tips

October 5-11 is Financial Planning Week. What are the best ways to improve your money and budgeting situation? These top five strategies will help.

1 Make saving a priority.

Saving on a regular basis can be hard, but if you treat this as an expense, you'll have better success. As with any bill, you should make it nonnegotiable to pay into your savings account each month. Even a little saved on a regular basis will make a difference. If you struggle with this strategy, consider an automatic deduction to a savings account to make it a no-brainer.



2 Plan for the unexpected.

A budget is crucial, but we don't always know what is in the future. To prepare for the unexpected, you need an emergency fund. This is different from a long-term savings account because you should expect to use this money at any time. By realistically developing a working budget and having a reasonable emergency fund, you will have the means to pay all your expenses and avoid debt.

3 Understand your emotions.

It is important to understand your money personality and that of your spouse. If you tend to be a spender, recognizing this and developing strategies to manage your expectations is important. A person who tends toward saving as much as possible also needs to learn how to properly spend money. If you and your spouse are opposite money personalities, communication about your financial goals will help you develop a plan that works for both of you.

4 Set your goals.

Without goals, you will be unable to stay on track. Getting input from a good financial planner can help you see how much you need to save for retirement. Paying off debt should always be your first goal in financial planning. You also need to identify what you want to spend your money on. If you love to travel, then your extra money after savings may go toward that. If you have significant expenses coming up, like college for your kids, or the purchase of a new home, then you should be clear about those goals. Whatever your goals are, identifying them, talking about them, and tracking them is crucial.

5 Don't bet on what you hope to happen.

Many people plan their financial present based on things they hope happen in their financial future. But if those things don't materialize, you can be in trouble, especially if you are accumulating debt now in anticipation of a change in your situation. Until you actually get that bonus, move to a cheaper city, inherit that money, or see the stock market move up, don't spend that money. It is better to have it actually be a bonus and increase in funds than to have to deal with trying to come up with money you'll never see.

Clean Force Client Testimonial

"If you are looking for a carpet cleaning company to do it right the first time then Clean Force is your answer. When we moved into our apartment, the carpets were supposedly cleaned. I decided to have them cleaned myself. Wes was courteous, prompt and went OVER AND ABOVE for us. Sure we could have called a bigger company who has "coupons" but I like to deal with the 'family owned' businesses. My carpets will always look old, but now at least they look clean. Thank you Clean Force!"
- Linda S., Greer, SC

The Good Life

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"What's creaking...you or the floor?"

Quick Tips

Travel Tip

It may be tempting to lie in bed when your back is acting up, but researchers have found that you may be making things worse. Bed rest can weaken back muscles, leading to longer pain episodes. The best treatment is moderate activity, use of pain relievers as needed, and adequate rest at night.

Car Tip

When cleaning your car, don't forget the weatherstripping around doors and windows. It should be washed with a mild soap solution and then rinsed clean. Coat with a wipe of a rubber protectant such as Armor-All or silicone.



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Offer expires 10/31/15.*



"A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches." - Proverbs 22:1a

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Win a \$10 Cracker Barrel Gift Card

Read this edition of Healthy, Wealthy & Wise to find the answer to the following trivia question:

Relative humidity in your home should be:

- a. maintained using a steam vaporizer
- b. kept between 30% and 50% relative humidity
- c. controlled with an automated central humidifier/dehumidifier
- d. ignored unless your skin starts to prune

Email your answer to cleanforcecompany@gmail.com or call our office at 864-271-3168. We will draw from the correct answers and someone will win a \$10 Cracker Barrel Gift Card!

Contest Expires 10/31/2015.



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