

# HEALTHY, WEALTHY & WISE

MAY 2025

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breathe  
better  
*Air*

**W**hen you get home at the end of a busy day, it feels good to take a nice deep breath in anticipation of a quiet evening indoors. That is what home is supposed to be; a refuge from the hectic world outside. But when you take that nice deep breath, do you ever stop to consider the quality of the air in your home?

## 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. Excessive 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

*See "Breathe Better AIR" on next page*



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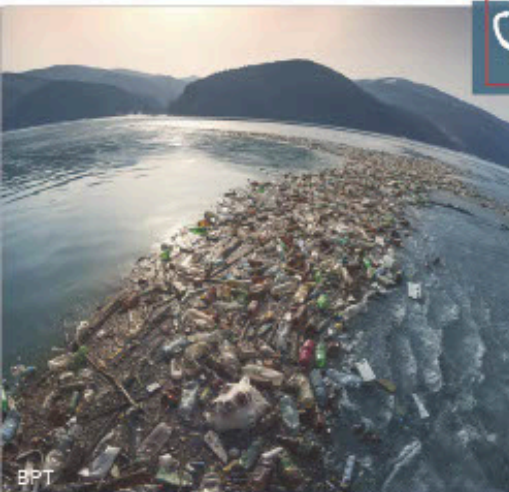
CHECK OUT THE LINK BELOW FOR MORE INFO:

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## Help Reduce Plastic Waste and SAVE Our Planet



The world's oceans are a magical, beautiful ecosystem ... and they need help - NOW! According to the Ellen MacArthur Foundation, by 2050, there will be more plastic by weight than fish in the ocean. Let that sink in!

The plastic problem in our oceans seems daunting, but if everyone does a little, the changes will make a big difference. Here's what you can do today to help.

Wondering about your own plastic footprint? **Take the QUIZ...** ([blueparadox.com/en/plastic-waste-crisis](http://blueparadox.com/en/plastic-waste-crisis)) to let you know for sure. Be honest with your answers, and the quiz will calculate the number of pounds per year you contribute to the plastic landscape.

**Reduce your use of single-use plastic where you can.** This is easier than you might think. Small, tangible actions such as avoiding single-use plastics like utensils and coffee cups, and swapping out your single-use plastic water bottles for a reusable one, can make a huge difference.

**Recycle your plastic.** Pop it in the bin! It has never been easier to recycle plastic. Most

rigid plastics today are recyclable. One tip: Give yours a quick rinse before tossing it into your recycling bin.

**Buy products made from recycled plastic.** When you're buying plastic products, look for ones made from recycled plastic. Windex bottles, for example, have been made from 100% post-consumer recycled plastic since 2015. Windex also has the industry's first bottle made with 100% recovered coastal plastic from a major home cleaning brand. Let's all work together to create a huge market for products made from recycled plastic and watch how quickly we clean up this problem.

If everyone - including industry - does their part, we can reduce the amount of plastics in our oceans. A little effort today can ensure a more beautiful tomorrow.

## Get SMART About Your Car Insurance



Consumers are facing increasing costs on virtually every purchase these days and auto insurance is no exception. Some of the common causes for higher insurance rates are inflation, car accidents, extreme weather conditions such as hail, hurricanes and wind, along with increased vehicle theft claims.

Here are some tips for lowering your insurance costs:

**Review your deductibles with your insurance agent** - It is recommended that you review your coverage and deductible at least once a year. Their experience can help you make better decisions regarding your insurance.

**Explore car insurance discounts** - In addition to bundling your home and auto insurance, discounts are offered for multi-cars, good drivers, good students and auto pay. See what additional discounts your agent may offer.

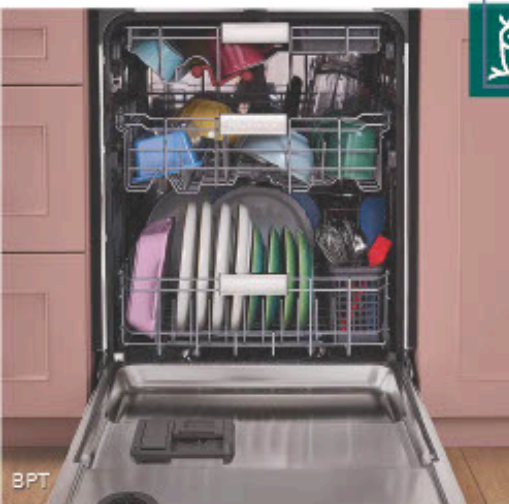
**Let Your Insurer Track Your Driving** - Most insurers offer discounts for customers who install telematics. This technology allows your insurance company to collect information regarding your mileage and driving habits. This can also provide valuable information regarding your driving as well as saving you money.

**Drive a safe car with low repair costs** - According to a recent study, some of the cheapest cars to insure are the Subaru Outback, Honda CR-V and Honda Pilot. Also, look for cars with lower repair costs such as the Toyota Corolla, Toyota Prius and Tesla Model 3. Doing some research before you purchase a vehicle can save you money over the length of ownership.

**Install an anti-theft device on your car** - Drivers may receive an additional discount if you install an anti-theft device on your car.



While skyrocketing costs of car insurance can be attributed to everything from parts replacement to service - consumers can better manage these increases with thoughtful study and attention to detail.



One question has persisted in households everywhere: Is there a right way to load a dishwasher? The answer is YES.



## TIPS on How to BEST Load your Dishwasher

**1. Let go of rinsing** - Most modern dishwashers have built-in sensors that measure the soil level of each load. Simply scrape off excess food and debris before loading.

**2. Make sure everything is dishwasher safe** - Don't clutter your dishwasher with items that don't belong, like wooden utensils, bowls, cutting boards (they might warp), cast iron and non-stick pans and silver or enamel (heat and detergent can ruin these finishes). Fine China (it breaks and chips easily).

**3. Load for maximum spray** - Angle items downward, toward the center of the rack to enable the maximum amount of spray jets to reach all surfaces. Avoid close nesting or overlapping. Don't block the spray from reaching dishes.

**4. Think rack by rack** - Start at the top - load smaller, lighter items like mugs, stemware, small plates and bowls. Lay large utensils flat on an upper rack - putting them in the utensil holder

could block the lower spray arm. Load smaller utensils on the upper rack - make sure they won't fall through open spaces. Load plastic containers on an upper rack away from the heating element to prevent warping or melting.

The lower rack is for large items like plates and cookware. Alternating large and small items helps spray arms reach all surfaces. Place soiled pans, bowls and casserole dishes on their sides. Oversized items like cutting boards or pans are best laid down on their sides or placed around the perimeter so the spray arm isn't impeded.

Finally, load utensil handles down in the holder, except for knives. Insert them blades down to protect fingers during emptying.

**Pro tip:** Unload dishwasher in reverse order, starting with cutlery and the bottom rack - this avoids having any water that's pooled in dishes in upper racks from splashing on items below while you're unloading.



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 can be challenging because most airborne particles are tiny and can be everywhere. Pollen, carbon, mold spores, organic matter, insect matter, pollution, and plain old dirt enter the home, transported on air currents, clothing and shoes. By keeping doors and windows closed, removing shoes when entering and immediately changing your clothing after dusty activities like yard work, you can reduce the entry of pollutants.

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. That's why exclusion is only part of the solution.

### Capture – filter and contain that which enters.

When airborne particles enter your home, they remain suspended for a period of time. Those that are larger or denser drop out of the air and settle on surfaces. Smaller, lighter particles remain suspended longer, and are best removed by air filtration devices and the filter on your home's HVAC (heating, ventilation and air-conditioning) system. Use high quality pleated filters designed for your HVAC.

### Clean – remove pollutants from surfaces.

Eventually, particles settle on surfaces such as floors, furniture, counters, windowsills, shelves and walls. Vacuuming and dusting remove most of

the particles, but make sure that your vacuum cleaner has good filtration also.

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, HVAC system, range hood, bathroom exhaust fans and so forth are working optimally. Clean or replace filters regularly. Speaking of filters, carpeting is the largest air filter in most homes because of its capacity to capture and hold large amounts of soils and pollutants. Keeping your carpet and upholstery clean is one of the best ways to clear the air in your home. Call **Chet's Cleaning** for more information or to schedule your next service.

## The Good Life



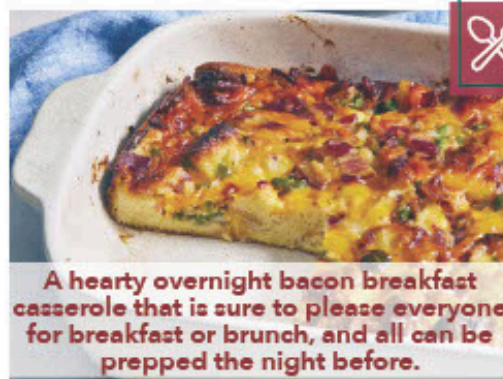
### Good Clean Funnies

**What animal needs to wear a wig?**  
A bald eagle!

**Why do shoemakers go to heaven?**  
Because they have good soles.

**Why couldn't the pony sing in the choir?** Because she was a little horse!

**Why is a snake difficult to fool?**  
You can't pull its leg!



### Ingredients

- 12 slices brioche, cut into 1" cubes
- 1/2 pound bacon, cut into 1/2-inch pieces, or more to taste
- 1/2 medium onion, finely chopped
- 1 green bell pepper, diced (optional)
- 8 medium eggs, or more to taste
- 1 1/4 cups milk
- 1 cup grated Cheddar cheese
- 1 teaspoon mustard powder
- 1/2 teaspoon ground black pepper
- 1/2 teaspoon salt

Recipe courtesy [allrecipes.com](http://allrecipes.com)



## Overnight Bacon BRUNCH Casserole

### Directions

Grease a 9x13-inch pan. Layer brioche cubes evenly in the prepared pan.

Cook the bacon in a skillet over medium heat, stirring occasionally, until it is cooked through, about 10 minutes. Remove from heat, including any rendered bacon fat, and allow to cool slightly, about 5 minutes.

Heat a small amount of bacon fat in the same skillet over medium-high heat. Sauté onion and bell pepper until soft, 5 to 7 minutes.

Beat eggs in a large bowl. Mix milk, cheese, mustard powder, pepper, and salt into the beaten eggs. Mix in bacon and onion-bell pepper mixture when done. Pour the egg mixture over the brioche bread cubes and give it a gentle stir so everything is evenly distributed. Gently press the cubes into the egg mixture as needed, so all the bread cubes are sitting in the liquid. Cover and refrigerate for 8 hours, to overnight.

Preheat the oven to 350° F. Bake in the preheated oven on the middle rack until set, the top is browned, and a toothpick inserted into the center of the casserole comes out clean, 45 to 55 minutes. Remove from the oven and allow to cool before serving, 5 to 10 minutes.





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