

HEALTHY, WEALTHY & WISE

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A CLEAN Carpet... A Healthier FAMILY

A United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) study revealed that carpet actually helps to clean out air in our homes and offices. The carpet acts as a giant filter, trapping dust, allergens, dander, pollen, and even air pollution. It also provides sound absorption and insulation. If properly cleaned and ventilated, carpet is safe and healthy economical flooring option.

Despite this study, some people still believe that carpet is bad for indoor air quality and causes health problems like allergies and asthma. The truth is that properly maintained carpets actually improve indoor air quality. The key to keeping the air in your home healthy is to have a maintenance routine for your carpet.

EPA Guidelines for Cleaning

Periodic professional cleaning is a major part of an effective carpet and air quality maintenance routine, eliminating the contaminants that build up over time. Of course, every household has its own unique combination of factors such as environment, number of occupants, children, pets,

See "A CLEAN Carpet" on next page



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and smoking or non-smoking, etc. So how often should you have your carpets cleaned?

Fortunately, the EPA is there to help with some basic guidelines for a total carpet maintenance plan based on the kind of use that your carpet receives, as follow:

- In a home with two people who do not smoke the EPA recommends that you have your carpets cleaned every 6-12 months, more often if you have a particularly dusty outside environment or an extremely humid or cold environment.
- If you smoke, the carpets should be cleaned at least every four months.
- If you have kids or pets these numbers cut in half. In fact, a home with 2 adults, a child and pets should be cleaned at least every 3-6 months, but every month if you live in a very contaminated or dusty area.
- Offices and restaurants, nurs-

ing homes and daycare centers should be cleaned once a month or even more frequently.

"Wait a minute!" you may say. "It seems a little extreme to clean my carpet that often." But think about the source of these recommendations. This is the Environmental Protection Agency, created to help assure the health and safety of living things in a variety of environments, including outdoors and inside homes and buildings. So, these recommendations are based on cleaning for health, not simply appearance.

Looking Dirty versus Being Dirty

Carpet is designed to hide soil, so it can hold a lot of dirt before it begins to look "dirty." Unseen contaminants build up in the carpet over time to the point where they may have a negative effect on the occupants of the structure, especially those with underdeveloped, sensitive or compromised immune systems. The key is to avoid letting the carpet get to the point where this happens.

Maintaining Your Carpet between Cleanings

Are we saying that if you don't get all of your carpets cleaned according to these EPA guidelines that you and your family will get sick? Not necessarily. These guidelines are just that, a guide. There are things that you can do to reduce the frequency of professional cleaning. First, make sure that you vacuum often; the more the better. Also, be prompt about cleaning up spots and spills. Use doormats at all entrances. Don't wear street shoes in the house. Finally, avoid going barefoot because body oils get on the carpet and attract dirt.

Regardless of how neat and tidy you are, there comes a time when you need professional carpet cleaning. Call **Chet's Cleaning** to schedule your next cleaning or to help choose a cleaning program that fits your lifestyle. You and your family will breathe easier; your carpets will look better and last longer.

The Good Life



Good Clean Funnies

What is the smartest kind of bee?
A spelling bee!

What can you catch but not throw?
A cold!

Why can't Cinderella play soccer?
Because she's always running away from the ball.

What do you get from a pampered cow? Spoiled milk!



This three-layer strawberry pretzel dessert salad includes a pretzel crust, cream cheese center, and strawberry top.

Judy's Strawberry Pretzel Salad

Directions

Gather ingredients, and preheat the oven to 350°F.

Mix together pretzels, melted butter, and 4 1/2 tablespoons sugar in a medium bowl until well combined. Press into the bottom of a 9x13-inch dish.

Bake for 10 minutes, or until lightly toasted. Set aside to cool completely.

In a medium bowl, beat the sugar and cream cheese until smooth.

Fold in whipped topping and spread evenly over the cooled crust. Refrigerate until set, about 30 minutes.

Stir together boiling water and gelatin mix in a second large bowl. Mix in frozen strawberries; stir until thawed.

Pour over cream cheese mixture in the dish. Refrigerate until completely chilled, at least 1 hour.

Recipe courtesy allrecipes.com

Ingredients

- 1 1/2 cups crushed pretzels
- 3/4 cup butter, melted
- 4 1/2 tablespoons white sugar
- 2 (8 ounce) packages cream cheese, softened
- 1 cup white sugar
- 1 (8 ounce) container frozen whipped topping, thawed
- 2 cups boiling water
- 1 (6 ounce) package strawberry flavored Jell-O
- 1 (16 ounce) package frozen strawberries



Why Your Home's Water Quality MATTERS



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Whether a home water filtration system fits your family's needs or point-of-use filters, like under-sink systems, which are more affordable and effective for specific things like drinking water or reducing lead, they all have benefits.

Do you think about your home's water quality? From daily showers to your morning cup of coffee, you use water for so many everyday tasks, including ones that can impact your well-being. That's why it's important to learn more about the water quality in your area.

What affects water quality - Tap water goes on quite the journey before it reaches your home. Water from natural sources like lakes, rivers and groundwater flows to municipal water treatment facilities where it is cleaned and purified. While these treatments make water safe to drink, some minerals and chemicals can impact the taste of your water and affect your skin and hair.

After it's treated, the water flows to storage tanks and then pipes before it enters your home. During its travel, the water can pick up sediments and other contaminants that impact your water quality. Luckily, there are various

technologies you can easily install in your home to filter the water you use every day.

Better, tastier drinking water - Does your tap water have a chlorinated or metallic taste? This is a common problem with a relatively simple solution. Installing an under-sink water filtration system can reduce the contaminants responsible for this taste, as well as other chemicals and sediments that negatively impact water quality.

Say hello to a hair and skin upgrade - In your bathroom, unfiltered water contains impurities that can strip the natural oils from your skin and hair, causing dryness and dullness. A simple fix is to upgrade your current shower head with a filtration attachment. Just like your under-sink filtration system, a shower head with a water filter can reduce common contaminants.

Why 'MOMpreneurs' are Essential to Their Communities



According to experts, growth in the number of female business owners has outpaced the market in recent years, with women-owned companies representing 39% of all businesses.

What could be a driver of this shift? Legacy. One-third of female business owners surveyed recently cite their primary motivation for starting a business as a desire to leave a lasting impact for their children and grandchildren. For these women, entrepreneurship isn't just a path to work-life balance - it's an act of generational empowerment essential to their communities.

Mompreneurs fill unique gaps in the market because they often start businesses based on personal experiences. This results in the creation of products and services that effectively solve problems for families and local communities. They're showing their children what's possible when you take a personal passion or value and turn it into a business.

Children raised in "mompreneurial" households grow up with firsthand exposure to the highs and lows of business, the dedication it takes to launch and grow an idea and the courage it takes to follow one's dreams. For daughters, it can plant the seeds of self-confidence. For sons, it can shape respect for women as leaders and equals in the workforce.

Nearly 70% of mothers say flexibility to spend more time with family is a major reason for starting their business. With that, mompreneurs have created support ecosystems for themselves and each other, redefining what work-life balance looks like. More and more, moms are designing businesses that prioritize flexibility and purpose.

When a mother becomes an entrepreneur, she's not just building a business, she's building a legacy - the ripple effects of which can last for generations.



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The number of business-savvy mothers blazing the trail as entrepreneurs is at a record high. "Mompreneurs" are transforming the business landscape, not just for themselves, but also for future generations.



LOW-MAINTENANCE, Easy Landscaping Tips



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Choosing the right materials and incorporating well-planned design features can enhance the appearance of your landscape while reducing the effort needed for maintenance.

Not all landscape elements are created equal when it comes to maintenance. Here are a few low-maintenance landscaping tips to keep your yard looking great all season.

Hardscaping: Utilize hardscaping elements like patios, paths, and retaining walls to reduce the need for regular maintenance and lawn care.

Plant Selection: Choose plants that are native to your region, as they are more likely to thrive with minimal care. Consider evergreens, ornamental grasses, and drought-tolerant plants. As an added bonus, native plants have many benefits to pollinators and local wildlife.

Ground Covers: Plant ground covers to smother weeds and reduce the need for weeding. They require less water and are an excellent option for areas where grass doesn't grow!

Ornamental Grasses: From creating a

great border, filling space in a garden bed, or adding texture to a design- ornamental grasses are usually drought-tolerant and require minimal maintenance once established.

Irrigation Systems: Installing an irrigation system that can be set to water on a schedule, reduces the need for manual watering.

Mulch and Mulch Alternatives: Use mulch, landscape rock or gravel to give landscaped areas a finished look. Mulch gives a clean appearance that enhances curb appeal. Rock and gravel require less maintenance and don't need to be replaced as frequently.

Decluttering: If your yard is cluttered with items you don't use, declutter to make it easier to maintain.

Think Vertical: Utilizing vertical space with interesting vertical gardens or living walls, reduces the need for ground-level landscaping.



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