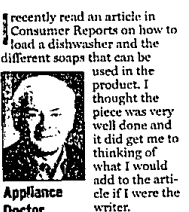


You may need less soap, higher temperature in dishwasher



Appliance Doctor
Joe Gagnon

I recently read an article in Consumer Reports on how to load a dishwasher and the different soaps that can be used in the product. I thought the piece was very well done and it did get me to thinking of what I would add to the article if I were the writer.

Picture this old writer of today when he was 12 years old living in the very remote area of northern Canada. My mother collected the dirty dishes in a basket. I would haul them down to the lake in front of our cabin. I would sit on the edge of the water and use the white beach sand along with water to scrape the dishes clean. Sticking the forks and knives into the wet sand and pulling them out was enough to do the job in that end. I placed the utensils back into the basket and returned them to my mother, who had a pot of boiling water on the stove and finished the job. I can assure you that there was not one little germ on any plate or cup, when she was done.

When my father took me prospecting with him, we were often away from a lake, but I did the same thing with the tin plates and cups, except he wouldn't heat boiling water to sterilize them. He always made me promise to not tell my mother the way we did it.

I compare the sand I used then to the grit of a powdered detergent used today. I don't like liquid soaps because they don't have a grit to them. You can say that the powdered soap will dissolve and that's true, but for just a few moments it is sprayed onto the surface of plates and does in effect, do the same job I did as a boy.

Ask and you will find that most homeowners do not put their fine china and cutlery in their dishwashers. Ask them why, and they have a standard answer - the dishwasher is too hard on these fine items. Ask them why again, and most people can't answer.

The reason why fine china is washed by hand is because the grit action of powdered soap can scratch them. When I cleaned those dishes for my mother using sand on the beach, I knew exactly how much sand to use without scratching the plates.

Most of you reading this column right now do not know the proper amount of powdered soap to use in your dishwasher. Let's take the consumer who doesn't read this column or listen to the radio show and I will bet you that over 90 percent of them do not know what the proper amount of soap is, to be used in the soap container of a dishwasher. The answer is 1 teaspoon, if you have a water softener system in your home, 7 teaspoons if on city water, and more than that if you're on well water.

My mother used the boiling water to treat the dishes before she dried them with her dish cloth and for good reason.

Way back then there was no polio vaccine and some areas of the world suffered through devastating sicknesses and scares - much like this recent virus of SARS is doing in today's world.

(My mother was so clean that every morning before I left for school, she would take

a bobby-pin with a cloth and stick it in my ears to make sure they were clean. How I used to hate that.)

What about the water temperature in your dishwasher? Is it hot enough? What is the proper temperature? Many of you just might have the water heater set too low! The operating books for dishwashers have for years said that 120°F is proper, but I believe this temperature is wrong, it should be 140°F. I guess we were both wrong because the new mandated temperatures are a minimum of 150°F.

So important is this that in the near future the manufacturer's dishwasher will not complete a washing cycle unless you have 150°F water inside a dishwasher. We can thank the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services for upgrading the hot water temperature in a dishwasher and reminding us of its importance.

Joe Gagnon is host of Ask The Handyman on Infinity Radio AM 1270 8 a.m.-noon Saturdays and Sundays. You can hear his tips on WHJ 950 on weekdays. You can call him on his show at (248) 356-1270.

beautiful private gardens on a self-guided tour. The newly expanded Children's Garden and Historic Community Congregational Church will also be part of the tour. Proceeds support beautification projects throughout Lathrup Village.

A Garden Boutique will offer plants, garden statuary, unusual garden accessories and original art from local artists. It will be at the gazebo in the park adjacent to the Municipal Building on Southfield Road. The Young Astronauts will operate a Garden Cafe, selling refreshments as a fundraiser. Call Pat Gore at (248) 559-0488 or Richard Reeves at (248) 569-5610 for tickets or tour information.

GARDEN WALKS AND TOURS

Rochester Hills
The Rochester Hills Museum at Van Hoesen Farm and the Women's National Farm and Garden Association will host a Garden Walk 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Thursday, June 19. Tickets are \$10 in advance, \$12 the day of the event. For an additional \$15, lunch will be available at the Point Green Cider Mill in Goodison 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Tickets are now on sale at the museum, on Van Hoesen Road off Tenken, 1 mile east of Rochester Road. They also may be bought by telephone with a credit card, or by check made payable to the City of Rochester Hills and mailed to 1005 Van Hoesen Road, Rochester Hills 48306.

The featured gardens were chosen to inspire and delight visitors with what grows in the back yards of residential areas.

For more information, contact the museum by calling (248) 556-4663 or e-mail house@mrochesterhills.org, or visit its Web site at www.rochesterhills.org/museum.htm.

Lathrup Village
The Lathrup Village Home & Garden Tour will take place 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday, June 21. Tickets are \$12 in advance, \$15 the day of the tour. Seniors are offered a discounted entry price of \$8. Ticket vouchers will be available after June 1 at the Lathrup Village City Offices, 27400 Southfield Road, three blocks north of I-96, between 11 and 12 Mile.

This year's tour is the eighth event co-sponsored by the Lathrup Village Historical Society and the Village Gardeners. It is an opportunity to view the interiors of five of Lathrup's most interesting homes and visit four

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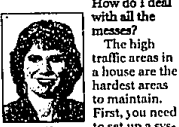
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Remove clutter in high traffic areas

The kitchen counter is piled with everyone's stuff. The family room is a collection of homework, mail, shoes, and coats. Wherever my family spends time there is clutter.



Domestic Planner
Diana Koenig

How do I deal with all the messes?
The high traffic areas in a house are the hardest areas to maintain. First, you need to set up a system that includes finding a place for everything. Secondly, you need to teach your family how to use your system. Create a verbal and written list of your expectations.

Counter Clutter/Kitchen Clutter: Determine what items are left on the counter and in the kitchen. Make sure there is an accessible home for each of these items and each person should know where the home is located. School backpacks should have a home on a hook in the garage, mudroom or in

'First, you need to set up a system that includes finding a place for everything. Secondly, you need to teach your family how to use your system.'

the child's bedroom depending on the layout of your house. Make sure you have a drawer in the kitchen for children's daily papers. Set up a file system for school notes and information you will need at a later date. Mail should be sorted and acted on immediately. You will need a bill box, a basket for reading materials, a coupon holder, and a specific home for each piece of mail. Place items that need to be returned or given to someone else in a container on a shelf by the door.

Bathroom Clutter: Bathroom counters become cluttered very quickly. You use the bathroom to get ready each

day. Therefore items such as the hairbrush, comb, curling iron, hair spray, and toothpaste decorate your counter each day. Everything needs a place. Use a basket on the counter to keep items that typically are left out. Items used less frequently should be stored in the cabinet under the sink contained in a basket.

Garage Clutter: The garage is an area you visit regularly. Imagine how refreshing it would be to walk through your organized garage to your car each day.

Start by purging items you do not need. Some items can be donated and others will need to be thrown away. Remove as many items from the floor as possible and hang them from hooks on the wall.

Attach shelves to the wall or purchase floor shelves and organize like items together. Put all the gardening tools and supplies in a basket and place on the shelf. Put sporting equipment together. Organize all the tools in the same area.

Laundry Room Clutter: This area piles up quickly. Use a three-compartment laundry

hamper. Teach your family how to separate their own clothing into the correct compartment. The three compartments should be labeled whites, darks and mediums.

You will save time sorting if everything is pre-sorted. Do laundry daily so it does not accumulate and spill out of the laundry hamper onto the floor. Fold laundry immediately from the dryer and put the clothing away. Piles of unfolded laundry in laundry baskets or stacked on the dryer creates unnecessary laundry room clutter.

Create a place for all items that enter your house and live in your house. Make sure items are in their place when they are not being used.

Today's Refrigerator Bulletin: "A place for everything and everything in its place!"

Diana Koenig is a writer, educator, speaker, consultant, and President of Domestic Planner® Direct Sales Company. Send your questions and success stories to: Diana Koenig, P.O. Box 1702, Manchester, MO 63031. E-mail her at: dianakoenig@hotmail.com or www.domesticplanner.com.

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EVENTS

Toy show
The Bloomfield Hills Toy Show will take place 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday, May 31, at Cross of Christ Lutheran Church, 1100 Lone Pine Road at Telegraph in Bloomfield Hills.

Admission is \$4 for adults, free for under age 12. Early bird admission, \$10, gets you in the night before and before 9 a.m. the day of the event. Toy dealers from Michigan, Ohio, Illinois and Indiana will be displaying items. Vintage tin, die-cast, press-street, plastic, battery-operated, wind-up, and cast-iron toys will be featured, as well as advertisements, figures and other fine collectibles. Call (248) 646-1047 for dealer or other information.

Matthew Botanical Gardens
Classes in the adult education program at the University of Michigan. Matthew Botanical Gardens include: The three-session Native Forest Habitats (see \$95, \$85.50 for members), beginning Thursday, May 15; and Bruce Peninsula, a Memorial Day weekend trip (\$295, \$280 for members; fee includes camping), Friday-Monday, May 23-26. Call (734) 998-7061 for information.

If you have an item for the garden calendar, please submit at least two weeks in advance of the date it should be published.

Send to Ken Abramczyk, At Home editor, Eccentric Newspapers, 805 E. Maple, Birmingham, MI 48009 or e-mail kabramczyk@homecom.net.

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