

CLEAN UP YOUR ACT

DUST GRABBER

SPRING IS THE PERFECT TIME TO MAKE YOUR HOME SHINE

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As the new year brings resolutions to clean up your act, spring is time to clean up your house.

Getting started on spring cleaning may seem difficult, but it doesn't have to be.

Tupperware consultant and kitchen organization expert Nellie O'Brien was in the area last month to share encouraging words related to cleaning and organization.

"It's not just to have everything look appealing, it's about saving time and money," said O'Brien, on Tupperware's "Kitchen Clutter Control" media tour.

O'Brien recommends starting in the kitchen. It's easier to throw things away there and keep your motivation.

Take one cabinet at a time. Empty it and wipe it out, and put food from opened boxes and bags into clear containers. Keeping the contents visible lets you know what you have and helps when you plan shopping, O'Brien said.

Arrange similar items into stations — snacks, baking, grain and pasta.

Carry this throughout your residence. Take one drawer, section of the room, or shelf at a time. Make tool stations in the garage, play stations in children's rooms.



Nellie O'Brien

Discarding

Some items to be discarded could be taken to a recycling center.

"When springtime comes, our phones are really ringing off the hook," said Heidi Jo Wayco, recycling coordinator at the Resource Recovery and Recycling Authority of Southwest Oakland County.

The RRRASOC is now accepting textiles, such as clothing and curtains. One of its drop-off centers is the Material Recovery Facility at Eight Mile and Evergreen roads in Southfield.

Before throwing something away, ask yourself, "Is it something that can be used by someone else? Can it be donated?" Wayco said.

The RRRASOC, which serves residents in Farmington, Farmington Hills, Southfield, Walled Lake, Novi, South Lyon, Wixom and Lyon Township, has scheduled household hazardous waste (HHW) drop-off days between April 21 and Oct. 13 in its communities.

The RRRASOC has added used computer equipment to the list of items it will accept at the six regional HHW events. This equipment includes central processing units, monitors, keyboards, mice, modems, printers and other personal computer peripheral devices.

Residents may take oil-based paint, pesticides, herbicides, cleaners, fluorescent light bulbs and other common household chemicals from their homes, garages and workshops to the HHW drop-off days.

Residents who live in Wayne County should call local public service departments in their communities about what household hazardous waste will be accepted and when drop-off days have been scheduled.

Livonia residents can take their hazardous household waste from 9 a.m. - 2 p.m. Saturday, May 5, to the Recycle Center on Glendale, east of Farmington. Call (734) 468-2655 for information.

Plymouth Township scheduled a similar drop-off day for township residents only 9 a.m. - 2 p.m. Saturday, May 19, at the Division of Public Services Building, 46555 Port, just north of M-14 on Beck Road. Call (734) 463-8131 ext. 33.

Garden City and Westland residents will be notified by mail when they can drop off items in May at the Central Wayne County Sanitation Authority in Dearborn Heights on Inkster north of Van Born.

Redford homeowners can leave household hazards on a Saturday in September. Canton also accepts these items from residents on a Saturday in the fall.

Consumers who are worried about household chemicals can make their own non-toxic cleaners. Gloria Boyajian carries ingredients for these cleaners at her Ferndale boutique, Aetheria.

"It's less expensive to go with herb-based or essential oil-based cleaners for your home," she said. "All you have to know is what they are and how to use them."

The boutique at 23140 Woodward also sells *The Naturally Clean Home*, a book featuring 101 herbal recipes for non-toxic cleaners.

Boyajian's recommendations include the essential oils lemon, lime, sweet orange, tea tree, lavender, wintergreen, citronella and

pine; and the basic materials baking soda, white vinegar, borax and salt.

These and other elements make carpet deodorizers, fabric softeners, oven cleaners, dishwasher detergents and floor cleaners, among other cleaning materials.

For example, white vinegar mixed with

ILLUSTRATION BY HELEN FURMAN

water is a good glass cleaner; add a few drops of lemon or orange oil for a fresh smell, Boyajian said.

Essential oils should be kept in a cool, dark place, Boyajian said. Be sure you buy the essential oil, not just the fragrance.

And handle the essential oils carefully. They are highly concentrated, can irritate skin and must never be used internally.

Professional touch

Some residents hire professionals to help with spring cleaning.

"As soon as the weather gets warmer, everybody wants their home cleaned for spring, and I don't blame them," said John Cohen, general manager of Molly Maid of Plymouth/Farmington.

If you have a certain date you'd like the cleaners to come, call well ahead of time, Cohen said. Also tell them ahead of time what specific things you want cleaned, such as the stove or behind the refrigerator. Pick up clothing, toys and other extraneous items before the cleaners arrive.

Bill Wurtzbacher, vice president of Modernistic Carpet Cleaning of Troy, recommends having a carpet cleaned a couple of times a year.

"You should consider getting your carpet cleaned on a maintenance program. It's not the cleaning that wears the carpet, it's the soil," he said.

Residents who want to do their own cleaning can rent or buy equipment from janitor supply businesses. These include powerful machines (carpet extractors, floor buffers, vacuum cleaners), and cleaning solvents meant to be diluted.

Vacuum cleaners at Weber Janitor Supplies, 34040 Glendale in Livonia, have such features as cloth bags, beater bars made of steel and 50-foot cords.

"These are made to run every day and they just last for years," said Gregory Weber, president.

Parnin Janitor Supply Co., 16355 Middlebelt in Livonia, makes its own cleaning solutions that are EPA approved.

"People are definitely into disinfectant," said Suzanne Parnin, vice president.

Parnin said one innovation in the cleaning business is the ozone machine, which absorbs odors in the air.



Clean scene: Pandemonium such as that in the above photo turns in many a kitchen cabinet. This mess was transformed into an organized storage system (right), using Tupperware's Modular Mate containers.



JAMES R. MILLER

What comes clean naturally: Aetheria in Ferndale carries non-toxic products and ingredients, such as Lavender Laundry Fragrance by Good Home Co. \$20.95 for 64 ounces; an orange candle, \$7.95; essential oils ranging in price from \$5.95 to \$15.95; and the book *"The Naturally Clean Home,"* \$12.95.

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