

Drying out from the Rain

After one of the wettest Septembers of recent years, homes have taken on excessive moisture inside and out. Mildew is unsightly and can produce a musty odor.



Mildew grows in warm, dark, damp places. To remove mildew, try a simple homemade cleaning solution. Commercial mildew removal products also are very effective. To prevent mildew growth, keep surfaces clean, eliminate moisture and ventilate well.

Some tips to prevent mildew from forming on furnishings and clothing include:

- Use air conditioner in the summer and heating system in the winter when relative humidity is above 60 percent.
- Keep house and clothes clean. Mildew begins on dirt.
- Stretch shower curtain out after every shower.
- Use moisture-absorbing materials during times of high-humidity. Some examples are silica gel and cat litter.
- Leave a low-wattage light bulb turned on in closets to dry out the area.
- Apply wax to leather goods.

If you see mildew already forming, a simple mixture of one gallon water and one cup liquid chlorine bleach is an effective mildew remover. In other cases, you may want to use detergent, white vinegar, washing soda or some combination of these ingredients.

CAUTION: *Never mix liquid chlorine bleach and ammonia. This can produce a toxic fume.*

Here are some solutions to common mildew problems:

Interior Wood Surfaces. Make a solution of 8-10 tablespoons of washing soda and 1 gallon water. Scrub the mildewed surface using a soft-bristle brush. Then rinse with clear water and dry. This solution can be used on most painted or stained wood surfaces. If the mildew has grown under the paint or varnish, extra steps will be needed. Call the Newton County Extension Office for help.

Ceramic Tile. Wash with a solution of ½ cup ammonia, ½ cup white vinegar, ¼ cup washing soda and 1 gallon warm water. Rinse thoroughly. For heavy mildew stains, make a paste of baking soda and liquid chlorine bleach, then scrub with a small toothbrush. If the grout is badly stained, apply pure bleach with a cotton-tipped swab. Allow the bleach to remain on the tile for 30 minutes, then rinse and dry.

Washable Apparel. First, take the clothing outdoors and brush off the mildew. Then apply a detergent to the stain and launder. If the stain remains and the fabric may be bleached in chlorine bleach, soak it in a solution of ¼ cup liquid chlorine bleach and ¾ cup water. Rinse and then launder. Instead of bleach, you can use salt and lemon juice and let the fabric dry in direct sunlight.

Remember to control mold and mildew you have to control moisture.
(submitted by Susan Cosgrove)

Hand Hygiene and Swine Flu

Americans appear to be embracing hand hygiene more than in past years. But not all of us are cleaning our hands as often as we should – especially with the threat of the H1N1 flu virus (also known as swine flu).

In the fifth annual Clean Hands Report Card® issued by The Soap and Detergent Association (SDA - www.cleaning101.com), America's grade for hand hygiene has risen from a "C-minus" in [2008](#) to a "B-minus."

The Report Card is based on a series of hygiene-related questions asked of 888 Americans during a telephone survey conducted in August 2009 by Echo Research.

Among the good news of SDA's 2009 survey:

- 50% say they wash their hands more than 10 times per day (up from 36%).
- 70% wash up at least 7 times per day (up from 62%).
- Across the board, more Americans claim to always wash their hands before eating lunch, after coughing or sneezing and after using the bathroom.

Among the bad news of SDA's 2009 survey:

- While 62% of women are washing more than 10 times per day, only 37% of men are doing the same.
- 39% of respondents seldom or never wash their hands after coughing or sneezing (on par with 2008).
- 46% of respondents wash their hands for 15 seconds or less (on par with 2008). The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and SDA recommend washing with soap and water for at least 15-20 seconds.

The H1N1 pandemic is real. Cold and flu season is on its way. With common sense hygiene practices, good health is literally in our hands.

Survey results recently released by SDA show that nearly two-thirds of adults (65%) expressed concern about H1N1 flu (women more than men: 72%, 57%, respectively). But only one-third of respondents said they changed their overall hygiene habits in response to the growing concerns about H1N1.

Now is not the time to let our guard down when it comes to cleaning our hands.
(Submitted by Susan Cosgrove)

'Go Green Christmas' Workshop October 27 in Newton

A creative workshop – **'Go Green Christmas'** will be held on Tuesday, **October 27 in Newton at Designs by Nikki**. There will be two sessions to accommodate your schedule: 9:30 a.m. to 12:00 noon and 6:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

Participants will make a cedar wreath plus learn other 'green' tips to spend less, make gifts, eat healthy and have a more meaningful holiday season.



Registration deadline is Friday, October 16. Cost is \$20 per person. Space is limited. Contact the Newton County Extension Office for more details at 601-635-2267.
(Submitted by Newton Extension Staff)



Applying Mulch

Fall is a good time to re-apply mulch. As you begin to tidy up the garden, removing old foliage and seed heads, consider putting down a fresh layer of mulch—particularly if you did not apply mulch to your beds this spring.

The benefits of mulching just cannot be stressed enough. Although getting it hauled in and applied to all landscape beds is one of the more strenuous garden activities, it is well worth the effort involved. It makes everything look fresh and sets off or frames your plants. I don't know of anything that gives the impression your garden is well tended more than a fresh application of mulch—even if it is not! Besides all the esthetic benefits, it retains moisture, moderates soil temperature and helps control weeds.

Mulch should be 4 to 6 inches deep in most cases. Do not pile the mulch directly next to the trunks of trees or shrubs or the crowns of herbaceous plants. Shredded bark or pine needles work best where rain may tend to wash the mulch as these types of mulch tends to stay in place. For other more level areas, pine bark, chips or other types could be used. I prefer organic mulches as these over time will decompose and add to the organic content of the soil.

Do not mulch beds where you rely on reseeding plants, such as spider flowers, poppies, larkspur, hollyhocks, to repopulate the beds. *(Submitted by Leanne McGee)*

Fall Decorations from the Woods, Fields and Garden

Begin collecting material now for those handsome fall and winter decorations...milkweed seed pods, cornstalks, hydrangea blooms, grass seed heads, nuts, cones, coneflower seed heads, globe amaranth, goldenrod, ironweed, iris

seed pods, even old wasp nests and interesting branches, lichens or fungi. The list could go on and on. Take the kids or the grandkids for a fall foraging foray into the woods and fields to gather interesting materials. Be sure to squirt the little squirts and yourself with insect repellent or you may bring home some uninvited guests!

Use what you collect as a free style bouquet, arranging your collection of cones, pods, acorns or whatever around the base of the bouquet container to spruce up a table, sideboard or other countertop. Attach items to a grapevine or straw wreath using a hot glue gun or florist wire. You could just pile your collection of nuts, cones, or fungi in a crystal or other decorative bowl and use that as a centerpiece. Add a little moss from the woods and presto you have a nice addition to your fall home décor.

Don't forget to check out the local farmers market for the dried cornstalks, hay bales, potted mums, gourds, pumpkins, winter squash, Indian corn, broom corn and other great fall items to use for decorating. You can even eat the pumpkins and squash when you get tired of your fall display! *(Submitted by Leanne McGee)*

Mums for Fall

Bright, vivid colored mums are synonymous with fall. Think football games, hay bales, scarecrows, pumpkins, gourds and mums. Of course, the word mums is short for one of our favorite perennial garden plants, the chrysanthemum. Visit any garden center or nursery now and you will have many, many choices of colors and sizes. When making your selection choose a plant with good shape and lots of unopened flower buds to ensure a long flowering period. Consider the bloom color and what other plants or accessories, such as gourds, pumpkins, baskets, pots, ornamental corn or whatever, will complement the flower.

For the most dramatic effect it is best to mass mums by color. If planting directly into a bed, be sure and space the plants so that the edges of each plant almost touch. Remember that odd numbers of plants tend to make the plants easier to arrange for that dynamic impact you are looking for!

If you're planting in containers, plant enough mums so that the container looks full with a mounding effect above the edge of the container. Mums combine well with many other plants. Ornamental grasses, ornamental cabbage and kale and pansies are just a few suggestions. Remember that the first killing frost we have will wipe out the mums. At that time you can yank the plants out and toss them in the compost or just leave in place, cut the tops back, and keep the stems pinched back next summer to encourage bushiness. Stop pinching the stems back by mid to late June so buds will have time to form for fall flowering. *(Submitted by Leanne McGee)*

It's not just for Luck- 4-H is for Mississippi

Do you know which four-leaf clover does more than any other one to give its bearer good-luck for success? Well I can tell you, it's the 4-H clover.

The 4-H Youth Development Educational program offers youth opportunities to develop skills and interests through participation in learn-by-doing projects. 4-H is the youth development program of the Mississippi State University Extension Service (MSU-ES), which is part of Mississippi State University.

Families have changed over the years. There are more single parents than ever before, and more often than not, both parents in a two-parent family work outside the home. But one thing hasn't changed—parent's desire to see their children grow into healthy, productive, successful adults.

The mission of 4-H is to help parents achieve that goal. 4-H helps youth acquire knowledge that can enable them to develop such life skills as communication, decision-making, leadership, interpersonal relations, community awareness, and global understanding. 4-H also helps youth form attitudes that will enable them to become self-directing, productive, and contributing members of society.

The 4-H mission is accomplished through the involvement of parents, volunteer leaders, and other adults who organize and conduct educational experiences in the community, school, and family setting.

4-H learning experiences are designed to help youth work with others in real-life situations. Youth enrolled in the Newton county 4-H program benefit from the expertise provided by the Mississippi State University.

Just as families have changed, so has the 4-H program—no longer is it a program just for farm youth. In fact, 4-H is rural, small town, downtown and uptown, in high-rises and housing projects, in suburbs, and on farms.

Become a 4-H youth member or volunteer. The 4-H program is open to all people without regard to race, color, sex, religion, disability, or national origin. To learn more about how the 4-H program can benefit your family, contact the Newton County Extension Service at 635-2268. *(Submitted by Katrina McCalphia)*

4-H Supper Club October 26

The Volunteer Leader Supper Club Meeting is scheduled for October 26 and will be held at the Coastal Plains Experiment Station. The Supper Club meeting will begin at 6:00 p.m. All volunteers will need to call in by October 15

if they are planning to attend. A light supper will be served for those in attendance.
(Submitted by Katrina McCalphia)

Voluntary Simplicity or Doing More with Less

Voluntary simplicity should not be confused with extreme frugality. Voluntary simplicity is choosing to live simply by "doing more with less" and being satisfied.

When asked "What do you do for enjoyment?" a growing number of Americans have a hard time answering. Unfortunately, many would respond that they have no time for simple pleasures.

The economic downturn has spurred a resurgence of the voluntary simplicity movement. The reasons may be a necessity for some, but for others it is prompted by the feeling that they have had enough of chasing the American dream to constantly acquire more or bigger stuff. The time spent working to obtain or maintain these material items leaves them little time to enjoy them.

The simple living movement is evidenced in a range of genres from reducing clutter, do-it-yourself (DIY), environment/greening and through a variety of media including magazines, books and television shows.

Voluntary simplicity should not be confused with extreme frugality. Voluntary simplicity is choosing to live simply by "doing more with less" and being satisfied. This concept is not for everyone, but having financial security certainly is.

Being satisfied with a scaled back lifestyle increases the amount of money you have available to save and invest. It reduces your debt now and in the future.

Here are some ideas of how voluntary simplicity may help your financial situation and help relieve financial stress.

Unless you have an unlimited supply, spend money wisely. The next time you are about to use your credit card, ask yourself if you would buy the item if you were paying cash. If the answer is no, leave it in the store, she advises. Research shows that most people spend less when paying with cash. We demand more value from purchases made with cash because of our psychological attachment to cash. This is not true of credit cards because we charge now and pay later.

Use automated financial services, such as direct deposit of your paycheck to a checking account, a savings and/or investment accounts. Automate bill payments. This helps you stick to a budget and reduce temptations to overspend. Spending priorities are automated.

Purge closets, home and storage facilities. Sell or give away the excess. If you sell the items, save the money earned, pay off a small debt or fund a family activity that everyone can enjoy. Do this often to help keep things organized and reduce your attachment to stuff.

Finally, set three simple financial goals. These may be steps to a larger goal. Write them down, read them daily, develop an action plan to achieve the goal and then follow the plan. This routine helps you focus and direct finances to what is important to you. Gradually, your lifestyle will change to follow your plan. (Submitted by Susan Cosgrove – source: www.uaex.edu)

Energy Saving Tips

- \$ Caulk and weatherstrip around windows and doors to stop air leaks.
- \$ Seal gaps in floors and walls around pipes and electrical wiring.
- \$ Change air filters monthly.
- \$ Replace incandescent bulbs with compact fluorescents – they use 75% less energy and last 10 times longer.

- \$ Install aerating, low-flow faucets and showerheads.
- \$ Fix any leaky faucets – one drop per second can add up to 165 gallons a month..
- \$ Tune-up your heating and cooling system annually to keep it running as efficiently as possible.
- \$ Have your ductwork inspected and repair any leaks.
- \$ Add insulation to your attic, crawl space and any accessible exterior walls.
- \$ Wrap your water heater with insulation or install an insulating blanket.
- \$ Look for the ENERGY STAR® label when replacing large or small appliances.
- \$ Use power strips for home electronics and turn off power strips when equipment is not in use.
- \$ Replace worn-out seals on your refrigerator and freezer.
- \$ Perform a do-it-yourself home energy audit. Online and paper versions are available.
- \$ Reduce hot water use by taking shorter showers and using cold water for the rinse cycle in your washer.
- \$ Turn off lights, televisions and other appliances when not in use.
- \$ Clean refrigerator coils regularly to keep compressor running efficiently.
- \$ Set the refrigerator temperature at 36° to 39° F and freezer at 0° to 5° F.
- \$ Use the microwave when possible – it cooks faster and doesn't create as much heat as a stove burner.
- \$ Air-dry dishes instead of using the dishwasher's heat drying option.
- \$ Run your dishwasher and clothes washer only when full.
- \$ Match the size of your pot or pan to the size of the burner.
- \$ Make sure your dryer's outside vent is clear and clean the lint filter after every load.



- \$ Keep all windows and doors located near your thermostat closed tightly.
- \$ Keep heat sources such as lamps and appliances away from your thermostat.
- \$ Consider replacing your older model refrigerator, especially if it's over 10 years old, with an ENERGY STAR refrigerator.
- \$ Install foam gaskets behind electric-outlet and switch-plate covers.
- \$ Dry one load of clothes immediately after another to minimize heat loss.
- \$ Defrost frozen food in the refrigerator before cooking.
- \$ Use the oven light to check on progress when cooking or baking.
- \$ Keep your outside air unit clean and clear of debris or weeds.
- \$ Use low-watt bulbs where lighting is not critical.
- \$ Place floor lamps and hanging lamps in corners. The reflection off the walls will give you more light.
- \$ Turn off outdoor lighting during the day. Try timer switches or photoelectric controls if the finger method is a bother.
- \$ Keep your freezer full. The fuller the freezer, the less cold air you lose when opening the door.
- \$ Use the self-cleaning cycle of your oven right after you finish baking. That will give it a head start in heating up.
- \$ Hang on to appliance manuals so you can refer to them for care information and possible energy-saving tips.
(submitted by Susan Cosgrove)






Halloween Health and Safety Tips

For many people, autumn events like Halloween are fun times to dress up in costumes, go trick-or-treating, attend parties, and eat yummy treats. These events are also opportunities to provide nutritious snacks, get physical activity, and focus on safety. Below are tips to help make the festivities fun and safe for trick-or-treaters and party guests.

Going trick-or-treating?

- S** Swords, knives, and similar costume accessories should be short, soft, and flexible.
- A** Avoid trick-or-treating alone. Walk in groups or with a trusted adult.
- F** Fasten reflective tape to costumes and bags to help drivers see you.
- E** Examine all treats for choking hazards and tampering before eating them. Limit the amount of treats you eat.
- H** Hold a flashlight while trick-or-treating to help you see and others see you.
- A** Always test make-up in a small area first. Remove it before bedtime to prevent skin and eye irritation.
- L** Look both ways before crossing the street. Use established crosswalks wherever possible.
- L** Lower your risk for serious eye injury by not wearing decorative contact lenses.
- O** Only walk on sidewalks or on the far edge of the road facing traffic to stay safe.
- W** Wear well-fitting masks, costumes, and shoes to avoid blocked vision, trips, and falls.
- E** Eat only factory-wrapped treats. Avoid eating homemade treats unless you know the cook well.
- E** Enter homes only if you're with a trusted adult. Otherwise, stay outside.
- N** Never walk near lit candles or luminaries. Be sure to wear flame-resistant costumes.

Expecting trick-or-treaters or party guests?

-  Provide healthier treats for trick-or-treaters, such as individual packs of raisins, trail mix, or pretzels. For party guests, offer a variety of fruits, vegetables, and cheeses.
-  Use party games and trick-or-treat time as an opportunity for kids to get their daily dose of 60 minutes of physical activity.
-  Be sure walking areas and stairs are well-lit and free of obstacles that could result in falls.
-  Keep candle-lit jack-o'-lanterns and luminaries away from doorsteps, walkways, landings, and curtains. Place them on sturdy tables, keep them out of the reach of pets and small children, and never leave them unattended.
-  Remind drivers to watch out for trick-or-treaters and to drive safely. *(Submitted by Susan Cosgrove)*

4-H invites you to participate in this year's National Science Experiment, **Biofuel Blast!**



Join millions of young people this 4-H National Youth Science Day, October 7, 2009, to explore renewable energy sources. This experiment can be done at school or home. For more information about the 4-H National Youth Science Day please call the 4-H office at 601-635-2268. *(Submitted by Katrina McCalphia)*

MS Women in Agriculture Annie's Project

Introductory Classes

October 15-16 in Vicksburg
Registration deadline 10/09/09

October 20-21 in Grenada
Registration deadline 10/15/09

Advanced Classes

November 17-18 in Hattiesburg
Registration deadline 11/06/09

January 15-16 in Starkville
Registration deadline 1/5/10

Cost - \$60

For more information contact
Newton County Extension
Office 601-635-2267



**MISSISSIPPI STATE
UNIVERSITY**

EXTENSION SERVICE

NEWTON COUNTY STAFF

County Director/Family Resource
Management Area Agent – Susan
Cosgrove

Extension Agent – Leanne McGee

4-H Agent – Katrina McCalphia

Nutrition Educator – Joey Ford

Office Associate – Clancy Norman

Mark Your Calendar

10/7 – Welcome to the Real World; Newton County
Vocational Center – 8am-3pm

10/8-10/17 – MS State Fair – Jackson, MS

10/13 – South Central Area MHV Fall Meeting –
Circle S Ranch – Lauderdale County

10/15 – Quick Bites – “You and the Flu” – Noon –
1pm; Extension Office *

10/16-17 – Fall Flower & Garden Fest – MAFES
Truck Crops Branch Experiment Station; Crystal
Springs, MS

10/17 – 1st Annual Wildlife Festival – Coastal Plain
Experiment Station; Newton

10/22 – Quick Bites – “Pretty but Cheap Holiday
Gifts from the Garden for Tight Budgets” – Noon –
1pm; Extension Office *

10/23 – MHV Council/Leader Training – 9:30;
Extension Office

10/26 – 4-H Supper Club – 6:00; Coastal Plain
Experiment Station; Newton *

10/27 – Go Green Christmas Workshop – 9:30-
Noon; 6pm-8:30 – Designz by Nikki – Newton *

11/6 – Home Buyer Education Class – 9am – 1pm;
Extension Office *

11/12 – Quick Bites – “Sights and Sounds of the
Holiday Season” – Noon – 1pm; Extension Office

11/19 – Quick Bites – “Low Maintenance Gardens
and Landscapes” – Noon – 1pm; Extension Office

12/1 – Home Buyer Education Class – 9am – 1pm;
Extension Office *

12/3 – Quick Bites – “The Making of Pepper-Jack
Cheese Smoked Sausage” – Noon – 1pm;
Extension Office *

12/4 – MHV Bake Sale – Courthouse

*****Must register in advance for these sessions. **
For more information on any of the above, please
call the Newton County Extension Office at 601-
635-2267.***