



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Get a Sparkling Home this Spring with IICRC's Cleaning Checklist

Las Vegas ó April 6, 2016 ó With spring comes a sense of renewal, making it the ideal time to assess your home's mess, conduct clean-up and call in the professionals for harder-to-remove stains. To help homeowners prioritize tasks for tidying up, the Institute of Inspection, Cleaning and Restoration Certification (IICRC) has released its spring cleaning checklist.

“As the weather improves, most people would rather spend time outdoors than inside with their vacuums,” said Bruce DeLoatch, IICRC Instructor and President, The Cleaners Coach. “With a comprehensive checklist, homeowners can focus on restoring cleanliness to the most affected indoor areas. By regularly cleaning and following this guide, they can limit indoor soil build-up, thereby reducing the cost and time burden of future cleaning.”

According to the IICRC's spring cleaning checklist, homeowners should:

1. Identify and tend to high-traffic areas

Dirt from outside is the top source of visible soil in main entrances and transition areas, such as from carpet to wood or tile floors. However, a large amount of dirt is also generated from within, from cooking oils, pet dander, dust mites and even nicotine in cigarettes. Start by thoroughly vacuuming areas that see a lot of activity, such as entryways and main living spaces. This removes dry particulate soil and contaminants that dirty floors and aggravate allergies. Give prompt attention to spots and spills, but never scrub. Instead, blot with a towel, apply a mild carpet solution, gently agitate and finish by rinsing and blotting.

2. Clean and rinse hard floors

One of the best ways to keep rugs and carpets clean is to properly maintain wood, stone and tile from which dirt can be tracked. Whether you use a mop-and-bucket, disposable cleaning pads or reusable microfiber system, finish by rinsing the surface with clean water so that all residues are removed after using the appropriate cleaning agent. Consumer products are effective at removing visible soils but if gaps between floorboards, grout or stone are discolored, it's time for a restorative cleaning by a professional.

3. Carefully assess upholstery stains

Dust mites are microscopic creatures that take refuge in places like beds and upholstery. Determine your upholstery type and follow the manufacturer's directions to determine dye stability before removing spots, spills and build-up. There are certain fabrics and dye types that could bleed, brown or shrink depending on the cleaning agent, so it's important to check if you can wet-clean with a water-based solution, solvent-clean or vacuum only.

4. Consider a deep clean of carpets

No matter the pile, carpet is talented at hiding a build-up of oily, sticky soil-attracting residues. Plus, many homeowners delay or improperly treat spots and spills, which can cause permanent damage to the color, texture and finish of the carpet. A professional can make recommendations for cleaning carpets based on factors such as soil conditions, the number of people in the home and whether pets, children and smokers are present. Consider getting carpets professionally cleaned each year.

5. Check for moisture-related issues

During wetter winter months, some homeowners may experience water damage that can lead to stains and provide an opportunity for mold to grow. Do a quick check of ceilings and walls for stains, as well as in attics and basements if you experienced heavy snow. Mold presents health risks and should be handled by a professional.

6. Don't forget about HVAC units

There are a number of factors that affect how often HVAC systems need to be cleaned, such as the level of filtration, how often windows are open, the presence of pets and/or smokers, etc. A good rule of thumb is to assess systems once every three years. For window units, clean the filter once per season, as these collect condensation that attracts soil, dust and debris on the coils. Find a company that is listed as a certified air duct cleaning specialist and HVAC contractor so that they are licensed to disassemble and clean the unit.

When dealing with professional cleaners, homeowners should choose a company with the proper licensing, liability insurance and trained technicians certified in the latest Standards, including the ANSI/IICRC S100 Standard for Professional Cleaning of Textile Floorcovering. The Standard identifies the best practices for professionals when performing commercial and residential floor covering maintenance and cleaning.

For more information about the IICRC or to locate a professional IICRC-certified cleaner in your area, please visit www.iicrc.org.

About IICRC

The IICRC is a global, ANSI-accredited Standards Developing Organization (SDO) that credentials individuals in 20+ categories within the inspection, cleaning and restoration industries. Representing more than 54,000 certified technicians and 6,000 Certified Firms in 22 countries, the IICRC, in partnership with regional and international trade associations, represents the entire industry. The IICRC does not own schools, employ instructors, produce training materials or promote specific product brands, cleaning methods or systems. For more information, visit www.iicrc.org.

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