

column submission - April 9 - Spring Clean challenge

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Sorry for my hiatus from submitting news columns. I will be writing a "Spring Cleaning" series to help myself and the community.

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Spring clean challenge

For the next several weeks, I will challenge you to clean various areas of your home. This will keep me accountable to you while I also engage in these tasks!

What is under your kitchen sink? I recently uncovered a toothbrush, deteriorating scrub brushes and multiple bottles of dish soap. My fire extinguisher is located under my sink. As I reviewed the extinguisher (it is a disposable type that can't be recharged or refilled), I realized that it is over 20 years old! The self test indicates it still has pressure, but for my peace of mind, I will replace.

We enjoy toasted bread but we have plenty of crumbs. Luckily, my toaster has slide out components that capture the extra crumbs. (If they weren't over 6 months old, I might use them for cooking!). I have been known to invert toasters to get ride of extra crumbs, too.

Part of my spring cleaning task included removing all flatware my drawer. I discovered spoons that escaped from community potlucks and more crumbs. I purged surplus twist ties and found a few bag clips that could be utilized.

This weekend, my task will be a thorough cleaning of the refrigerator and oven, including underneath and behind these appliances.

For effective cleaning of your fridge, remove drawers and shelves. Let glass shelves adjust to room temperature so they don't crack. Wash with hot, soapy water and use a toothbrush to get into tight spaces. (That is why I had the toothbrush under the sink - too bad I threw it away!).

Wipe down the interior walls of the fridge and door shelves. Dry all surfaces with a clean towel or paper towels. A sanitizing solution can be made with 1 tablespoon liquid bleach in 1 gallon of water. After applying the sanitizing solution, let it air dry.

Check your instruction manual for recommended methods for cleaning your stovetop and oven. A simple vinegar and baking soda mixture is mild yet effective. Avoid using harsh scouring pads, knives or metal kitchen tools that may scratch or damage surfaces. Never mix ammonia with commercial oven cleaners.

A clean kitchen is welcoming and helps with food safety. For more resources, contact K-State Research and Extension Cowley County at the Cowley County Courthouse ,weekdays 8-11:30 a.m. and 12:30- 5 p.m. at 620-221-5450.

Source: www.cdc.gov/foodsafety/communication/clean-refrigerator-steps.html and www.cleaninginstitute.org/cleaning-tips/clean-home/room-room/cleaning-refrigerator

Upcoming K-State Research and Extension Events

Ask a Dietitian - April 27, 4:30-5:15 p.m. Zoom or Cowley County Courthouse, Extension Assembly Room, free

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