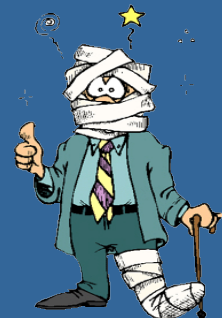




Safety Talks

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We're also on the web:

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Topping off the gas?

Do you top off the gas tank and overfill it? When the gas pump nozzle clicks off automatically, do you add a little more gas to round off the dollar sale?

According to the Environmental Protection Agency, topping off your gas tank is bad for the environment and your wallet. Topping off the gas tank can result in your paying for gasoline that is fed back into the station's tanks because your gas tank is full. In areas of ozone problems, gas station pumps are equipped with vapor recovery systems that feed gas vapors back into their tanks to prevent vapors from escaping into the air and contributing to air pollution. Any additional gas you try to pump into your tank may be drawn into the vapor line and fed back into the station's storage tanks. Also, adding more gas after the nozzle has automatically shut off can cause

the station's vapor recovery system to operate improperly. This can contribute to the air pollution problem and may cause the gas pump to fail to work for the next person. Gasoline vapors are harmful to breathe.

Gasoline vapors contribute to bad ozone days and are a source of toxic air pollutants such as benzene. Remember, you pay for the gas that evaporates or is spilled on the ground



Splash Protection

Splash protection is warranted when the likelihood of splashes is high. The ODU Chemical Hygiene Plan requires eye protection while performing or watching work where there is any reasonable probability of exposure to the eyes. Exposure also includes potential hazardous impacts or explosions, and toxic or irritating vapors.

Here is a list of some "splashable" activities to consider:

- Opening a stationary container of liquid
- Inserting a pipett
- Withdrawing liquids with a pipette
- Discharging liquids into an open vessel
- Dispensing liquid nitrogen

- Carrying glass bottles of liquids
- Handling open vessels of liquids
- Working with distillation systems under pressure

Appropriate protection may include goggles, face shields, and aprons



Change your clocks, Change your wiper blades...

Daylight saving time is often utilized as a reminder for important biannual maintenance such as changing smoke detector batteries.

Though often overlooked, wiper blade inspection and change should also be considered an important item on the daylight saving checklist. Wiper blade innovator

TRICO Products suggest the "change your clocks, change your wiper blades" rule of thumb to ensure blades are replaced biannually.



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Safer Household Chemicals



Safety at home is as important as safety in the workplace. As people are becoming more aware of hazard reduction around the house, they are often bombarded by advertising tactics to buy more elaborate and potentially harmful chemicals to purify their surroundings. It becomes difficult to determine the right thing to do when manufacturers heighten fears of health calamities if one does not use the "new and improved" product.

A recent EPA report concluded that the toxic chemicals in household cleaners are three times more likely to cause severe health problems than outdoor pollution. We need not depend on toxic or hazardous chemicals when safer chemicals are available and less expensive. Such chemicals as baking soda (sodium bicarbonate), vinegar (dilute acetic acid), borax (sodium tetraborate) and 3% hydrogen peroxide are superb at keeping the home clean without endangering people, pets or the environment. These chemicals are far less toxic than what is found in most cleaners. Here are some of their applications:

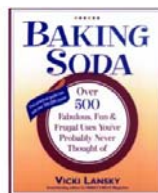
Baking soda (Sodium Bicarbonate) — A water-soluble, mildly abrasive crystalline compound that can buffer or neutralize acids (keeping the pH as close to neutral as possible) which enables it to work in a wide variety of applications. It can neutralize the fatty acids of dirt and grease and at the same time scrub the surface without scratching. Any brand of baking soda will do and can be purchased at the grocery store.

Vinegar (4-5% acetic acid)— A mild organic acid that neutralizes basic chemicals (works in the inverse manner of baking soda). Many disease-causing organisms die in the acidic environment of vinegar; making it an ideal cleaning agent. You can use white or apple cider vinegar; both work the same.

3% Hydrogen Peroxide— Hydrogen peroxide is a dilute form of a very powerful oxidizer that causes organisms to "burn up" from too much oxygen. It is an excellent bleach as many bottle blondes will attest. Exercise caution; hydrogen peroxide can irritate tissue. Hydrogen peroxide must be stored in an opaque bottle because it is light-reactive. Peroxide can be purchased at a drug store or grocery store.

Borax (sodium tetraborate decahydrate)— Borax is a naturally occurring compound and is considered non-polluting. It has a low hazard rating. It is toxic if swallowed in concentrated form; and must be kept out of reach of children and animals. It works well as a cleanser and fungicide. You can find it in the laundry detergent sections of your grocery store.

Alone or in combination, these four chemicals are very powerful, yet very safe cleaning products for your kitchen, bathrooms and laundry. Combining these cleaning agents increases their effectiveness without becoming hazardous. This is not true for other chemical mixtures, and in safety considerations, it is assumed that the combination of chemicals yields a more hazardous mixture. This is particularly evident when chlorine and ammonia are mixed. The resultant vapors are potentially lethal.



Information for this article was gathered from the book:
Baking Soda Over 500 Fabulous, Fun and Frugal Uses You've Probably Never Thought Of by Vicki Lansky.