



Spring Cleaning for a Healthy Home

Just when we thought spring would never come, here it is! With spring, comes the ritual of spring cleaning. While cleaning, organizing, and getting rid of a few unwanted items is helpful, the Scott County Health Department wants to remind you to spring clean with health, safety, and the environment in mind.

Your Health & Safety

Cleaning removes dust, allergens, and germs, which is important for maintaining a healthful home. However, before you break out the cleansers to give your home a fresh start, Scott County Health Department encourages you to carefully read and follow the label directions on your cleaning supplies. According to the [U.S. Environmental Protection Agency](#) (EPA), some common household cleaning products may contain chemicals associated with eye, skin, and respiratory irritation, or other health threats. If products are mishandled, the risks increase. Chemical contact with the eyes, being overcome by fumes, and accidental poisoning from household products are the common sources of calls to 911 and/or poison control centers. Prevent risks to your health



by following safety directions such as wearing safety glasses, gloves, protective clothing, and a mask. Prevent poisonings in young children by keeping cleaning supplies up and out of reach. It is also important to know that you should never mix products together. Chemicals could react with dangerous results. For example, bleach and ammonia, when mixed, can create a poisonous gas.

The Environment

Some cleaning supplies and other items such as stain remover, weed killer, paint, and compact fluorescent lights may be considered household hazardous wastes (HHW). HHW is waste that is dangerous or potentially harmful to health or the environment. Household products that contain the words poison, danger, warning or caution on the product label indicate the highest hazard levels. While you are spring cleaning, it is very tempting to throw away items such as half empty paint cans or barely used stain remover, but Scott County Health Department encourages you to find out which materials are HHWs so you can decide what to do with them. Choose from the following options:

- **Keep HHWs.** Perhaps you will use up the rest of that fertilizer in your garden this summer? If you decide to keep HHWs around, be sure to have them labeled and keep them out of the reach of children and animals.

- **Exchange HHWs.** The [Waste Commission of Scott County](#) has a Product Exchange Facility where materials can be taken to the facility and sorted. Visit www.wastecom.com for facility information and exchange details. Materials that are deemed reusable are made available for the public to take free of charge. This is a great option as 25% of materials people want to get rid of can be used again.



- **Dispose of HHWs.** Never pour HHWs down the drain! Disposing of HHWs improperly can negatively impact our environment, including the water supply. Instead, read the label on the package to decide how to dispose of it. For some items it may be acceptable to include them in your regular trash. For others, it is better to take them to the Waste Commission of Scott County's HHM facility. [HHMs are accepted by appointment only.](#) There is no charge for this service for residents of Scott County. Residents may make an appointment by calling (563) 381-1600 or filling out the online form at www.wastecom.com.

Don't Forget Your Medicine Cabinet!

While cleaning, be sure to look for old chemicals or medicines that have expired or will no longer be used. There are several ways to get rid of unwanted medicine.

1. **Take back to a pharmacy.** Bring unwanted and expired medicines into a participating Take Away pharmacy. Visit <http://www.iarx.org/takeaway/>
2. **Make undesirable and dispose in trash.** For safety reasons, it is better to dispose of medications than to hang onto them. Be sure to follow the directions on the Scott County Waste Commission's Web site for making medicines undesirable to children and thieves before disposal. Visit www.wastecom.com.

Note: Please use these methods to dispose of old medicines. The Waste Commission of Scott County no longer accepts medicine through their household hazardous materials program..





MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

- *Scott County Board of Health Meeting, Scott County Administrative Center, 1st Floor Boardroom, 12:00PM Thursday, May 16, 2013.*

OUR MISSION:

The Scott County Health Department is committed to promoting, protecting and preserving the health of the community by providing leadership and direction as advocates for the individual, the family, the community and the environment we serve.

OUR VISION:

As recognized and respected leaders in serving and protecting our citizens, we at the Scott County Health Department are committed to a safer, healthier community and environment. In so doing, we provide a multitude of services with Professionalism, Responsiveness, Involvement, Dedication, and Excellence.

SCOTT COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Scott County Administrative Center, 4th Floor

600 West 4th Street

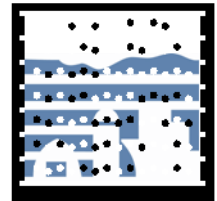
Davenport, Iowa 52801-1030

Phone: 563-326-8618

Fax: 563-326-8774

E-mail: health@scottcountyiowa.com

Web site: www.scottcountyiowa.com/health



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