

# BLUEGREEN LIVING

SEPTEMBER 2017

Published exclusively for clients of Bluegreen

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## Is it okay for me to use those miracle stain removers I see on TV?

Whether you watch television during daytime talk shows, in the middle of prime time, or during a fit of insomnia at 2 am, you simply can't avoid them. There is a variety of commercials and infomercials trying to convince you that some liquid in the bottle will magically remove any spot or stain you have on your carpet, no matter where it originated, how long it's been there, or what type of carpet you have.

While it is possible that some of these products have some value, it is not possible that any product can do all of these things. Every fiber is different. Every spill is different. So there is simply no one-stop solution to clean everything. And, unfortunately, using some of these "miracle" stain removers in the wrong place can cause irreversible damage to your carpet.

### Miracle Oxygen Cleaners

One popular product that people tend to try, and place great faith in, is the "Oxy" cleaners seen on infomercials. If you choose to use these cleaners, exercise caution. Professional carpet cleaning companies are seeing more

and more damage being done to carpet by the oxygen bleaches in these cleaners. The damage can range from minor color loss to large permanent yellow stains caused by the chemical reaction with the carpet fibers.

Theoretically, these products should be safe if used according to the manufacturer's directions. But there are things that can and do affect the chemical reaction and can make results vary greatly. For instance, the exact nature of the spot you are trying to remove matters. Some stains do not react well to oxygen bleaches, and can even become permanent if you use those products.

Another problem is sunlight. Under sunlight, the oxidizer becomes more chemically active and aggressive, resulting in heightened bleaching action. Remember, anything that has the ability to remove food coloring has the potential to destabilize the dyes used to give your carpet its color.

### Other Product Promises

There are other products that use high

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## Raspberry Oatmeal Cookie Bars

### Ingredients:

- 1/2 cup packed light brown sugar
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 1/4 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/8 teaspoon salt
- 1 cup rolled oats
- 1/2 cup butter, softened
- 3/4 cup seedless raspberry jam

### Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees F (175 degrees C). Grease one 8 inch square pan, and line with greased foil.
2. Combine brown sugar, flour, baking soda, salt, and rolled oats. Rub in the butter using your hands or a pastry blender to form a crumbly mixture. Press 2 cups of the mixture into the bottom of the prepared pan. Spread the jam to within 1/4 inch of the edge. Sprinkle the remaining crumb mixture over the top, and lightly press it into the jam.
3. Bake for 35 to 40 minutes in preheated oven, or until lightly browned. Allow to cool before cutting into bars.

*Tip – Aluminum foil can be used to keep food moist, cook it evenly, and make clean-up easier.*

*recipe courtesy allrecipes.com*

## Miracle Stain Removers *(continued from cover)*

pH detergents in conjunction with the oxygen bleach to help break down greasy spots and spills.

While this can be quite effective in removing the offending spots, it can leave behind a residue that destroys the stain resistant properties of your carpet. This is not visible damage, however it is quite real. The result is an area that is “unprotected” and therefore vulnerable to permanent staining the next time something is spilled there.

Also, these highly alkaline residues are often quite sticky, attracting soils. So even though the spot goes away, the area keeps getting dirtier and dirtier. So you apply more cleaner and leave more residue, in

a never-ending, frustrating cycle of futility.

If you had the ability to apply, agitate, rinse and thoroughly extract the chemicals, it wouldn't be so bad. But removing all of the stuff you pour on the carpet can be quite difficult. So what can you do?

Your safest bet when you have a difficult stain is to call Bluegreen before attempting to remove it yourself. We are an experienced carpet cleaning company, and can give you options as to the best way to handle the situation while avoiding any damage to your carpet. We can also give you tips for removing small spots in the future.

## Easing Your Financial Stress

According to surveys, up to 80 percent of Americans suffer from significant financial stress. There are lots of ways to work on improving your financial situation, but you also need to address the mental stress on you and your family.

Your first strategy to reducing stress should be to take an honest look at your financial situation. This may seem counterintuitive. After all, spending time analyzing the situation should increase your worry, right? Well, actually not knowing your financial state is the largest cause of anxiety. Denial is also a contributor. Not knowing if you can afford another car is different than knowing you cannot afford it. While the picture may not be pretty, at least you will know where you stand, and this is the only way to begin to improve things.

Next, consider which of your habits are leading to your financial state. This can be hard, as this often involves emotional issues related to money. For example, if you tend to lavish gifts on your friends, you may be trying to get them to like



you more. If you buy a new car every couple of years, you may be insecure about how others see you. Examine how you emotionally connect to your money, and you may surprise yourself with how much is unnecessary spending.

So, once you are honest, know where you stand, and have confronted your financially-unhealthy habits, it all comes down to budgeting. Your budget is your roadmap to reducing your financial stress. If you go off course, your stress will simply increase. Coming up with a realistic budget and sticking to it are hard, but the benefits are enormous. Not only will you be able to meet your financial obligations, but your stress and worry will be reduced.

## Buyer Beware

When you are in the market for a used car, it is important to know how many miles it has run. Unscrupulous sellers know it is possible to alter the reading on the odometer.

In fact, the Consumer Federation of America estimates that up to one in ten used cars have their odometer rolled back, a practice called “clocking” or “spinning.” This practice is illegal in all states, but it is hard for the average consumer to detect. Even digital odometers can be easily tampered with using devices made for recalibrating broken digital odometers.

If you are looking at a car that you believe has an odometer that has been set back, take a moment to inspect the brake pedal. If the pad has worn through to the metal beneath, it is a good indication that it has excessive miles. You may also want to lift up the floor mat under the brake and accelerator pedals to look for wear. If the driver’s seat is also very worn, it can mean that there are excessive miles on the car.



Examine the instrument panel closely. If it looks as if it has been tampered with, you should not purchase the vehicle. You may see fingerprints or scratches on the interior of the plastic cover or the numbers may not be aligned. Even without these clues, the vehicle may have been tampered with.

Finally, you can also request a CARFAX report on the vehicle. This can be ordered either by the seller or the buyer. To be absolutely sure, you should plan on having any used car professionally inspected by a qualified mechanic before purchasing.

## Color Tips for Room Decorating

You may not realize it, but the colors in your room can make all the difference. Color can influence the mood and tone of a room.

**Blues:** Cool, calming, and a sense of restfulness.

**Reds:** Exciting and stimulating.

**Greens:** Cool, reflective, and relaxing.

**Yellows:** Bright and cheery, energetic and expansive.

**Whites:** Clean and inviting.

Choose one color to be your main focus and then accent it with one or two complimentary colors. Color can be anywhere in a room, from the walls and floors, to your furniture and accent pieces. Add fringe to pillow, put up new

curtains, add color with candles—the possibilities are endless. Keep in mind also that lighting can change the way colors look in a room. When choosing colors, view them under the same lighting you will have in your room.



## Bluegreen Client Testimonials

“Thank you! I just have to say, once again your guys have done an amazing job!! They are polite and efficient and we will only be using Bluegreen in the future! Thanks for another great experience!”

– **Brittany Nothem, Design 2 Construct, Jackson, WI**

“From the first call, I was greeted with kindness and professionalism. All my questions were answered. I had hardwood floors, bathroom tile, area rug and upholstery done. I am thrilled with all work completed. The courtesy of all staff is to be commended. Thank you. I will most definitely refer to others.”

– **Carey Balistreri, Wauwatosa, WI**



## Quick Tips

### Healthy Dog Tip

**Your Scent for Anxiety** – Don’t toss those old sweatpants! Put them in your dog’s bed, and he’ll stay calmer and sleep better, having the scent of you nearby. This trick is also useful if you’re going on a trip—add an old piece of clothes that you haven’t washed to your dog’s carrier and he’ll be more relaxed.

### Organizing Tip

**Pillowcase It** – After washing and folding the pieces of a sheet set, put the whole set right inside one of the pillowcases, which is a convenient way to make sure everything stays in one place.



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