BLUEGREEN LIVING

MARCH 2017

Published exclusively for clients of Bluegreen

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ALLERGY ALERT

What To Do When You Move Into A Home That Previously Had Pets

People with allergies to pets can suffer from symptoms that range from mildly annoying to unbearable. If you or someone in your family has allergic reactions to pets, you already know the cause is dander. Dander, made up of particles shed from animals and humans every day, is mainly comprised of dead skin cells. People can be allergic to dander from any kind of animal, but the most common allergies are to cats, followed by dogs and lastly, birds.

Regardless of the animal, dander is microscopic and ends up on just about every surface in the home. This is a problem if you are planning on moving into a home that previously housed pets. Bluegreen offers the following suggestions as a way to minimize exposure to these allergens.

Step 1. Meticulous Dusting

A very thorough dusting of all surfaces in the house is the first step. If you plan to do this yourself, wear a disposable filter mask designed to remove allergens. The goal of this cleaning is to remove as much dust from surfaces as possible. Prior to dusting install pleated furnace filters designed to remove allergens. Set the central furnace blower to run continuously to capture airborne dust created during the cleaning.

Working from top to bottom in each room, be sure to get all of the dust from above door and window frames, ceiling fans, duct grills and baseboards. It is preferable to do this meticulous dusting with a HEPA vacuum and brush attachment. After you are done, turn off the furnace blower and allow the dust to settle for one to two hours, then vacuum the carpets thoroughly. A HEPA vacuum is preferred as they can capture 99.97% of all allergens.

Step 2. Meticulous Cleaning

Once you are confident that you have removed as much dust as possible, all surfaces should be cleaned. Allergies are caused by various proteins, and some of these are contained in residues adhering to all sorts of surface. There is no need to use special anti-allergen cleaners to do this. Any cleaner designed for the surface will do. However, if you are sensitive to fragrances or certain chemicals, there are low VOC products

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Health Nut Blueberry Muffins

Ingredients:

- 3/4 cup all-purpose flour
- 3/4 cup whole wheat flour
- 3/4 cup white sugar
- 1/4 cup oat bran
- 1/4 cup quick cooking oats
- 1/4 cup wheat germ
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1 cup blueberries
- 1/2 cup chopped walnuts
- 1 banana, mashed
- 1 cup buttermilk
- 1 egg
- 1 tablespoon vegetable oil
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract

Directions:

1. Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F (175 degrees C). Grease a 12 cup muffin pan, or line with paper muffin cups.
2. In a large bowl, stir together the all-purpose flour, whole wheat flour, sugar, oat bran, quick-cooking oats, wheat germ, baking powder, baking soda and salt. Gently stir in the blueberries and walnuts. In a separate bowl, mix together the mashed banana, buttermilk, egg, oil and vanilla. Pour the wet ingredients into the dry, and mix just until blended. Spoon into muffin cups, filling all the way to the top.
3. Bake for 15 to 18 minutes in the preheated oven, or until the tops of the muffins spring back when lightly touched.

recipe courtesy allrecipes.com

Allergy Alert *(continued from cover)*

available. VOCs are volatile organic compounds that can cause respiratory irritation in some individuals.

What about the carpet? The best option is to replace the carpet prior to cleaning the home. If the carpet is to be cleaned, the goal is to reduce the allergens to negligible levels. Of course Bluegreen should handle this for you. Our cleaning system is designed to remove deeply embedded soils, pollutants, allergens and contamination that could otherwise aggravate allergies.

Step 3. Replace Filters
During the cleaning, a significant amount of allergens were most likely dispersed into the air. Wait about 24 hours and then replace furnace filters again with high quality allergen reducing filters.

Ideally, the ventilation system should be professionally cleaned to remove contaminants and potential allergens found in the ductwork, air conditioner coils and air-handler.

For most people, a home with a previous pet can be cleaned well enough to make it a great place to live. If you have severe allergies, you should always seek the advice of your doctor. Ask if it is okay to move into a home that was previously occupied by pets.

Our goal at Bluegreen is to clean not only for appearance, but also for health. Please call us if you have any questions. It's our pleasure to help.

Job Seeking Scams

If you are looking for a job, the last thing you need is to have your hunt derailed by becoming the victim of a job-hunting scam. These tricks are being used by identity thieves to get your personal information and profit off of it. Watch out for these three types of ruses these scammers will use.

Bogus Interviews. You may be contacted via email with an invitation to an interview out of town. In this scam, you are offered discounted travel and hotel accommodations, but only if you go through their "corporate office." This is just a way to get your credit card and other personal information.

Stimulus Lies. If you get an email or letter from a "government agency" offering you a job that is funded with federal stimulus money, beware. While there is legitimate recruitment going on for these types of jobs, you will not be contacted in this way.

Job Search Site Scams. Even on legitimate job-search sites, you can find scams. Identity thieves will scour the site for listings of your name, address, and other personal information, or they may contact you asking for these things.

To protect yourself, initiate contacts yourself. Ask for contact phone numbers and then do some research on the mentioned company to make sure that it is legitimate. Call the main switchboard and ask for the name of the contact you are given. You should also never give out personal information such as your date of birth or Social Security number until you are well into the job application process or have been offered a job.

Five Smart Things To Do With Your Tax Refund

Do you get your tax refund and just blow it immediately? There are some smart things you can do to make your refund work for you.

Pay off some debt. Especially credit card debt. Because you end up paying so much in interest charges, paying down a high interest credit card is your best bet.

Put it away.
Whether you are saving for a home, retirement, or college for your kids, putting extra money away now pays off in the long run. The longer it is earning interest, the larger the fund will be in the future.

Use it for a necessity. You may have been waiting to get those new tires or to go to the dentist. Now is the time to do it.

Make a donation.
If you've been wanting to support a charity near to your heart, but haven't had the funds, do it now. It will help on next year's taxes as well, if you itemize and take the deduction.

Treat yourself.
If you find that you still have money left over, do something nice for yourself that you've been putting off. Take a trip, throw a party, or buy a loved one a gift. After practicing some fiscal responsibility, you'll deserve it.

Keeping the Beat

If you are having trouble sticking to your exercise routine, it may be that all you need is a little music. Researchers at Fairleigh Dickinson University found that people who listen to music during a workout are more likely to stick to their exercise plan. Those who used music during their workouts also lost more weight and body fat.

Why does music have this effect? It is a motivating factor and is very effective at distracting you from the hard work of exercise, including pain, exertion, and sweating. Although upbeat music is best, you will get the benefits by listening to any music that appeals to you.

Bluegreen Client Testimonials

"Thank you for your fine service- excellent in every way!"
– Joan L.

"The office staff was courteous and fun to talk to. Very professional. The list of things to do ahead of the visit that was sent was helpful. Good idea. The technician was so nice and pointed out some things I hadn't thought of. Very kind. I can't believe you vacuum before you clean. There were two big stains they got out. The carpet looks lovely. Excellent service. I am very pleased. Thank you."
– Mary H., Milwaukee, WI

Quick Tips

Healthy Living Tip

Spring cleaning can have a positive effect on your health. Researchers at Indiana University found that people who have tidy houses are more likely to be physically fit. Vigorous cleaning can burn up to 130 calories in 30 minutes, so it is a great way to have a clean house and a more active lifestyle.

Home Tip

Next time you vacuum, take your vacuum cleaner into your laundry room. Pull out your dryer and vacuum behind it. Pull off the tube that runs from the machine to the vent and clean it out too. Finally, take a shop vac and clean out the vent from the outside opening. Do this about twice a year. Not only does this help prevent a fire hazard, but you'll save money because your dryer will run more efficiently.

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INSIDE THIS ISSUE OF BLUEGREEN LIVING

Allergy Alert... What To Do When You Move Into A Home That Previously Had Pets

MARCH SPECIAL

$50 off any Carpet, Upholstery, Rug, Tile/Grout, Wood or Vinyl Floor Cleaning

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