

HEALTHY, WEALTHY & WISE

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LOVE That **NEW** CARPET SMELL

Smell is the most primitive of the five senses. The fragrances of food enhance our sense of taste. Pleasant scents create a feeling of calm and contentment, while unpleasant ones may be a cause for alarm. Unfamiliar odors can create anxiety, especially when the source is unknown.

The nose knows, as they say. But what about “new carpet smell?” For many, this odor is welcome, as we enter a carpet store or have new carpet installed in our own homes. It smells like a new beginning. But is this smell hazardous?

Volatile Organic Compounds

The unmistakable odor produced by new carpet is caused by a volatile organic compound or VOC.

Volatile simply means it evaporates readily at normal temperatures. This volatility makes it easy for us to smell. VOC's are present in many new man-made building materials including sheet vinyl floorcovering, wall coverings, floor finishes, adhesives and paint. VOCs are what create “new car smell”, “new carpet smell” and the smell that you probably don't enjoy so much after you paint a room.

See “LOVE That SMELL” on next page



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There are many different types of VOCs but the one related to new carpet odor is 4-phenylcyclohexene (4-PCH), a by-product of the synthetic latex binders used to hold the carpet backing together. Although new carpet does produce this volatile organic compound, emissions from carpet as measured during EPA studies ranked among the lowest overall contributors to indoor air quality issues. Most of the VOCs present in carpet dissipate within 24-48 hours after installation. Ventilation during and after carpet installation helps to reduce that length of time.

EPA Testing

Several years ago, as the EPA was renovating its Washington DC headquarters, some employees complained that odor from the new carpet was making them sick with a variety of symptoms including respiratory irritation, headaches and general malaise. The EPA enlisted

help from carpet and latex manufacturers to investigate the complaints.

Following laboratory testing and extensive government agency review, no connection between 4-PCH and any kind of adverse human health outcome could be established. As a result, the EPA describes 4-PCH as an "unremarkable chemical."

Many people have the belief that "new carpet odor" is caused by formaldehyde used in the production of carpet. Research conducted by the School of Textile Engineering, Georgia Institute of Technology dispelled this widely held myth. Current industry standards are in place so that all new carpet produced is monitored for this chemical. Formaldehyde has not been used in the production of carpet in the United States for decades.

Latex Issues

What about people who are allergic to latex? The latex used in

modern carpet is synthetic and not linked with the allergic reactions caused by proteins found in natural latex. All of the materials used in the manufacture of carpeting are primarily the same harmless materials found in clothing, furniture and bedding. Nylon, polypropylene, polyester and wool constitute the majority of the components found in carpet.

So the conclusion is that there is no evidence that new carpet odor is a cause for alarm. However, since odors can create different reactions in individuals, it makes sense to address any complaints to prevent discomfort. As mentioned earlier, ventilating the structure during and after installation is the best way to reduce the buildup of 4-PCH in the indoor environment.

Contact **A-Town/Hi-Tech** today for more tips, help or to schedule your next appointment.

The Good Life



Good Clean Funnies

What do you call two birds in love?

Tweetharts.

How do we know that the ocean is friendly?

It waves.

What falls in winter but never gets hurt?

Snow.



A very moist, delectable cake filled with all kinds of surprises. It has been known to "knock your socks off".

Ingredients

- 1 (18.25 ounce) package devil's food cake mix
- 2 (8 ounce) packages cream cheese
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup white sugar
- 1 (21 ounce) can cherry pie filling
- 2 (1.3 ounce) envelopes whipped topping mix

Recipe courtesy allrecipes.com



Stole My HEART Chocolate Cake

Directions

Prepare chocolate cake according to directions, using a 9 x 13 inch baking pan.

While cake is baking: in a medium-size mixing bowl, mix cream cheese and sugar together until blended. In a separate bowl, mix the powdered whip topping according to directions until light and fluffy. Place the cream cheese mixture and whipped topping in the refrigerator.

When the cake has finished cooking and cooling, spread the cream cheese mixture over the cake. Next, pour the cherry pie filling over the cream cheese mixture. Frost carefully with the whipped topping and refrigerate until ready to serve.





Make Healthy SLEEP a HABIT in 2021



U.S. adults lose sleep due to drinking alcohol past their bedtime, binge-watching TV, reading a book, watching a sporting event, and playing video games.

The American Academy of Sleep Medicine (AASM) recommends that adults sleep at least seven hours each night to promote optimal health and well-being. Sleeping less is associated with an increased risk of obesity, diabetes, high blood pressure, heart disease, stroke and frequent mental distress.

Why should we make healthy sleep a priority in 2021?

Sleep makes you healthier. Without good sleep, both mental and physical health suffer greatly.

Sleep makes you happier. Sleep has a positive effect on your mood and overall sense of well-being and can improve your relationships.

Sleep makes you smarter. Good sleep is conducive to learning, memory recall, creativity and cognitive function.

What are some tips to help develop healthy sleep habits?

Set a bedtime that allows you to get enough sleep.

Establish a bedtime and waketime routine. Develop a nightly routine that evokes calm and relaxation. Allow ample time to wake, reflect and prepare for the day ahead.

Only use your bedroom for sleeping. Limit noise and distractions. Make your bedroom quiet, dark, and a little bit cool.

Set a technology curfew. Turn off your TV and other electronic devices 30 minutes to an hour before bedtime.

Limit alcohol, caffeine and large meals before bed. Keep any after dinner snacks small, sugar-free and easily digestible.

Tips to Support SMALL Businesses



Whether it's a local eatery, service provider, or retail store, when you shop small, you're supporting real people striving to keep their entrepreneurial dream alive.

Here are a few simple ways to help support small businesses:

Shop now: No need to wait for a sale or special event. Remember, small businesses depend on you to make ends meet and keep doors open.

Go online: For small businesses that offer e-commerce options, consider safe and convenient online orders that ship directly to your home.

Shop in person: Visit shops in person when possible. Many businesses will also let you order ahead and opt for curbside or doorway pickup as well.

Consider gift cards: Not sure what to buy? Gift cards are always welcome.

Leave reviews: Online reviews can make a big difference for small businesses. Go online and leave rave reviews for your favorite stores to help spread the word.

Be vocal: In addition to online reviews, talk up your favorite small businesses.

Partnerships: Look for small businesses who partner and offer products or services that complement each other.

Double up: For businesses like independent coffee shops or bakeries, consider a larger order and share with your friends or co-workers.

Be patient: Small businesses are dealing with a multitude of challenges these days, from supply chain holdups to sluggish shipping and beyond. Your kindness is valued and your patience is crucial.



Try reverse shopping: Rather than thinking of the recipient and then where to shop for a gift, think of the shop first and then the recipients that would most like items offered there.



Safety FIRST: Pet-Proofing Your HOME



We all want to make the most of life with our new furry companions, and by following the suggested tips, we can do so safely.

Welcoming a four-legged friend into your family is an exciting time for everyone, but puppies, kittens, dogs and cats can easily get in serious trouble while exploring their new surroundings. Here are 5 quick tips to help keep your new pet safe:

Put away the toxins: Many common household items are toxic to pets, including cleaning supplies, detergent, bleach, fertilizer, pest or rodent bait traps and paint.

Secure small hardware: Pets are attracted to small items that they can mouth, chew or bat around - from buttons, pins, batteries, magnets, to nails, staples, tacks and paper clips - can cause cuts or damage internal organs if swallowed.

Beware of food bags ... and practice proper food storage: Leaving a bag of chips or box of cereal open on the couch

or kitchen table may seem harmless, but many food bags, including for pet food, are made from a strong material that can trap a curious pet.

Conceal electronics: To keep your pet from chewing or getting tangled in the wires and cords, bundle loose cords behind furniture and store extra chargers and cables out of reach or camouflage them with cable-coverings or tape.

Keep dangerous ingredients out of reach: Chocolate, grapes, raisins and certain spices can be harmful to your pets. Xylitol, a sugar alternative found in everything from cake mixes to yogurt, is another toxic ingredient. Best practice is to keep all food and ingredients stored in cupboards, pantries, drawers or on high shelves out of reach of your pet.



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