



## The Ultimate Guide to Spring-Cleaning Safety

It's that time of year again, when the flowers bloom and the birds begin to sing. But perhaps less exciting, it's also the time of year when people perform spring-cleaning chores and eliminate the clutter that has accumulated during the winter months.

To ensure you and your family remain safe throughout the year, Merriam Insurance recommends you follow these tips while you are performing your spring-cleaning chores:

- Maintain Carbon Monoxide and Smoke Detectors.** Replace the batteries in all detectors and ensure all hard-wired detectors are properly connected.
- Replace Flashlight Batteries. In many areas, springtime means thunderstorms.** Make sure all your flashlights have fresh batteries in case of a power outage.
- Inspect Fire Extinguishers.** Ensure that all extinguishers are in their correct locations, are visible and accessible, and that their gauges or pressure indicators are in the green zone.
- Check Household Chemicals.** Inspect your cleaning supplies and other household chemicals to check for leaking containers and things you no longer use or need. Be sure to dispose of outdated hazardous chemicals properly.
- Inventory Medicine Cabinets.** Take stock of everything in your medicine cabinets and properly dispose of any outdated prescriptions and over-the-counter medications.
- Update First Aid Kits.** While you're checking your medicine cabinets, go a step further and examine your first aid kits. Properly dispose of anything that is outdated and restock things that are running low or are depleted.
- Develop a Family Emergency Plan.** Every household should have a family emergency plan in place. Review your plan and rehearse it together at least once a year.
- Clean Major Appliances.** Pull all major appliances, such as washers, dryers, ovens, and refrigerators away from walls and clean underneath and behind them. Use a vacuum to clear away any lint or debris from ventilation areas before you return them to their space.
- Replace Furnace Filters and Clean Fireplaces/Wood Stoves.** Replacing your furnace filter and cleaning your fireplace or wood stove now will ensure that you're ready to heat your home when the colder weather returns.
- Inspect Windows and Doors.** As you're cleaning your windows, check the locks and screens to make sure they're in proper working order. Check the locks on all exterior doors as well.
- Clean Roof and Gutters.** Inspect your roof to make sure that it's in good repair and will stand up against wind and rain. Replace, or have a professional replace, any parts that are leaking or loose. Check and clean your rain gutters and downspouts as well to keep them clear so when the rain does come, they can do their job.
- Inspect Decks and Patios.** Inspect your decks and patios for loose railings and boards as well as raised nails or screws. Be sure to clean any areas that might cause a slip and fall hazard.
- Inspect Recreational Equipment.** Make sure all playground equipment, bikes, skateboards, etc. are in safe working condition before you or your family use them.

Following these tips as you're doing your spring-cleaning chores will help to ensure that you and your family enjoy a safe and happy summer. Contact Merriam Insurance today to learn more.