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Entertaining Made Easy: How to Have a Stain-Free Summer

Tips for managing all-too-common spills and messes during the summer months

Las Vegas ï June 20, 2016 ï With warmer weather now a mainstay and children out of school, the summer season brings more opportunities for entertaining and enjoyment. But an influx of party and house guests, kids and pets can also lead to unsightly spills and messes inside the home. To help homeowners prevent permanent stains, the Institute of Inspection, Cleaning and Restoration Certification (IICRC) has outlined response tips for quick spill cleanup.

“From alcohol and soft drinks to dirt and pet accidents, there are a number of spots that may settle on your carpets and upholstered furniture,” said Craig Jasper, an IICRC-approved instructor. “If the right steps aren’t followed, a potentially temporary spot can become a permanent stain. These tips help simplify spot removal to restore the home to pristine condition.”

When you discover a spot, follow these tips:

1. **Deal with spills immediately.** According to ANSI/IICRC S100 Standard, spots are foreign material on the surface of a fiber, usually changing the texture of the fiber (e.g., sticky, oily, greasy, stiff). Spots can be usually be removed, but if left untreated for too long, some can become stains.

   Stains indicate the addition of color, frequently in liquid or pigment form, that can alter the structure of the fiber. Not all stains respond positively to removal efforts.

2. **Remove solid material.** Some spills, such as chocolate cake, mud and vomit, can contain solid aspects. Use a tablespoon or the edge of a dull knife to remove these before treating the spot.

3. **Blot.** Blot with a clean and absorbent white towel or napkin to remove excess liquid. Then blot with the appropriate solution for the stain. Work from the outer edge of the spot towards the center. Take your time and repeat if necessary. Be careful not to over wet the spot and do not rub or brush it.

4. **Always pretest removal agents**
Spot removal varies based on the type. For instance, mud, soft drinks and ketchup will need to be blotted with a half tablespoon of dishwashing detergent mixed with one glass of water. Then, blot with a solution of one part ammonia and three parts water.

For pet accidents and chocolate, follow the same process as above, and then apply white vinegar and blot. For vomit and grass, apply an enzyme detergent and keep the stain moist for 10 minutes. Blot and then apply an ammonia solution, followed by white vinegar. For blood, apply the detergent and ammonia solutions, followed by an enzyme detergent. For beer and wine, apply the detergent solution and then white vinegar.

If color changes occur during removal, stop and call a professional.

5. **Rinse the area.** The final step in spot removal is to use water and blot until dry.

6. **Contact a professional when all else fails.** A certified carpet, hard floor and upholstery cleaning professional will have the proper tools, equipment and knowledge to tackle a stubborn stain in your home.

For more information about the IICRC or to locate a professional IICRC-certified cleaner in your area, please visit [www.iicrc.org](http://www.iicrc.org).

### About IICRC
The IICRC is a global, ANSI-accredited Standards Developing Organization (SDO) that credentials individuals in 20+ categories within the inspection, cleaning and restoration industries. Representing more than 54,000 certified technicians and 6,000 Certified Firms in 22 countries, the IICRC, in partnership with regional and international trade associations, represents the entire industry. The IICRC does not own schools, employ instructors, produce training materials or promote specific product brands, cleaning methods or systems. For more information, visit [www.iicrc.org](http://www.iicrc.org).

### Press Contact:
Jessica Messenger
Mulberry Marketing Communications
312-664-1532
jmessenger@mulberrymc.com