

Cleanliness is Next to Godliness

by Judy Diehm

Quick, here comes the moving van. Are the suitcases in the car? Did they bring the big van? We have lots of stuff to move.

Now they are taping their boxes and someone in the kitchen is wrapping all of the dishes to go into the dish pack. Finally, it's time for the mattresses to be loaded and the doors on the van are closing. Goodbye household goods!

Now the real work begins. First the sweeping of the floors. Have you cleaned the bathrooms yet? Make sure they are spotless. Have you used the toothbrush on the grout? Looks good to me. What next?

Time to take the wax off all the floors. This stuff really stinks, but it does the job. It's looking better and better.

Now comes the next phase ... it's the kitchen. Off goes all of the old shelf paper and the cupboards are wiped clean. Get up on the step stool and make sure that it's all clean. Use that 409 to clean the grease off the range top. Now it's on to the SOS pads. Finally, it's beginning to sparkle. And now the next dreaded job, the oven, *aghhh*, not the oven! This is before the days of self-cleaning ovens so manual labor is called for here. Out come the racks and the SOS pads get a workout again. Make sure there isn't a speck of anything on them. Are they clean enough to eat off of? Time to spray the Easy-Off into the empty oven. On go the rubber gloves and after a lot of wiping it looks clean. Wait, we have to take all of the screws out and make sure they are clean underneath and in the groove on the screw. I'm exhausted, what do you mean we're not done?

The windows are waiting for the Windex. Several rolls of paper towels later they are shining. Do you have the Q-tips? What do we need Q-tips for? Now we have to take the Q-tips and clean all of grooves where the screens fit and then the grooves where the windows open and close. This is absurd, I feel like we should put a big banner across the house like they used to do to the toilets in the motels, signifying that it's squeaky clean. I'm exhausted, what comes next?

Today is the day the base housing inspector comes. Are you sure everything is clean? I hear they have made the claim that they always find at least one thing that people forget. Sure enough, here he comes to tell us he found a dime-sized spot in the linen closet that didn't get clean.

At last, we are ready to move on to our next duty station and our next base housing. You just need to know I am never going through that again. I will sell our oldest child to get money for someone else to come in to do this. They guarantee that the house will pass inspection and we can be on our way.

But ... it is nice moving into a clean house to start out with.

My favorite story about cleanliness is when my mother said, "Save yourself for marriage," I thought she was talking about housework!

In the meantime, if you want to come visit please do, but call a day or so ahead so I can clean the house.

