

Press Release

Vileda Survey: Hygiene increasingly important to spring cleaning in Germany and Italy

Innovative products from the Freudenberg brand help with hygiene around the world / Useful tips from cleaning expert

Weinheim, Germany, April 7, 2020. Frequent handwashing, keeping your distance and sneezing into your elbow – mindfulness in public is more important than ever. However, hygiene awareness in the home has also become more important. A representative survey carried out in Germany and Italy by the ⁱ Vileda brand reveals that hygiene is not just important to the general public due to the current situation. It also plays an important role when it comes to spring cleaning at home: More than 60 percent of German survey respondents think hygiene is the primary reason for cleaning. In the current situation, hygiene has become more important than just a year ago, half the German respondents agree. The trend is even more pronounced in Italy. Nearly 80 percent of Italian survey respondents think hygiene is the primary reason for cleaning. Scientists and developers from Vileda, part of global technology group Freudenberg, are experts when it comes to cleaning. They develop innovative products for spring cleaning around the world and help keep homes hygienically clean.

Fifty times thinner than a single hair, weighing less than a gram with cavities called capillaries that absorb dirt and moisture: Welcome to the inside of a microfiber. A microfiber cloth consists of countless tiny fibers and is therefore able to remove even the smallest particles and bacteria that hide in tiny cracks on surfaces like glass. Cleaning with microfiber cloths also leaves surfaces sparkly clean – largely thanks to the cavities between the fibers.

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In fact, it is not the fibers that remove dirt and moisture but the tiny cavities in between them. This differentiates microfiber products from standard cleaning textiles: A cotton fiber, for instance, swells in water. By contrast the capillary effect of a microfiber cloth means it is capable of taking the water into the cavities, making it easier to rinse and dry. Since it dries quickly, fewer bacteria and pathogens can take root.

Tips for using microfiber cloths

“Using a microfiber cloth, you can remove grease and dirt as well as bacteria without having to add any cleaning agents,” says Dr. Julia Grote-Pastré, head of cloth, sponge and glove development at Freudenberg Home and Cleaning Solutions (FHCS). Vileda microfiber cloths not only keep private households clean, they are also used in hospitals, for which the Vileda experts recommend the so-called “four-color-concept”: This color coding ensures that cleaning staff use different cloths and mop heads within a building, choosing among four different colored cloths, depending on the area they are working on. The goal is to limit as much as possible the contamination from bacteria, viruses and pathogens within a building. Red cloths are used for toilets and urinals, yellow cleaning products for other sanitary fixtures, such as mirrors or wall tiles. Blue products clean the tables and shelves in patient rooms or offices, whereas green is used in the operating theaters. Grote-Pastré explains how this color-coding can be used to ensure better hygiene in private households: “The Vileda microfiber cloths come in different colors. We recommend assigning a certain color to a specific room in the home, such as blue for the bathroom or orange for the kitchen. Our cloths are durable and can be washed at 60 degrees Celsius, meaning any dirt particles and bacteria the fibers pick up can be completely removed, leaving the cloth ready for the next use. It is important to let the cloth dry after use to prevent the growth of bacteria, which thrive in damp environments.” One of the Vileda innovations

is the “ActiFibre” all-purpose microfiber cloth, whose special coating allows for more water absorption and which can remove dirt and even dried-on stains. The PVA (polyvinylalcohol) coating increases the microfibers’ absorption capacity. As a result, no follow-up wiping is needed after damp or wet wiping, as the cloth only leaves behind a film of very fine drops that quickly dry up without any streaking.

Gloves protect against viruses and bacteria

When it comes to cleaning the house, reusable gloves are the best choice. “Reusable gloves are well suited to spring cleaning. We recommend that colors be assigned to different rooms, such as the kitchen or the bathroom,” says cleaning expert Grote-Pastré. “The gloves have long cuffs that help prevent water from entering. They also have a cotton lining to prevent excessive sweating. Reusable gloves protect hands from the cleaning agents used for scrubbing or rinsing and are available as latex and latex-free versions.” The outside of the gloves should be rinsed with water after usage and allowed to dry. Should water get inside, they can be dried by turning them inside out.”

When it comes to cleaning difficult areas such as toilets or removing infectious contaminants, disposable gloves are the better choice. In addition to also protecting against viruses and bacteria, they are thinner, have a better haptic feel and are thrown out immediately after use. “These types of gloves are also well suited for brief usage to protect against viruses or bacteria when shopping at a supermarket, where you have to touch the grip on a shopping cart or other surfaces,” says Grote-Pastré.

About the Freudenberg Group

Freudenberg is a global technology group that strengthens its customers and society long-term through forward-looking innovations. Together with its partners, customers and research institutions, the Freudenberg Group develops leading-edge technologies and excellent products and services for more than 40 markets and for thousands of applications: Seals, vibration control components, technical textiles, filters, cleaning technologies and products, specialty chemicals and medical products..

Strength of innovation, strong customer orientation, diversity, and team spirit are the cornerstones of the Group. The 170-year-old company holds strong to its core values: a commitment to excellence, reliability and pro-active, responsible action.

In 2019, the Freudenberg Group employed approximately 49,000 people in some 60 countries worldwide and generated sales of more than €9.4 billion. For more information, please visit www.freudenberg.com

About Freudenberg Home and Cleaning Solutions

Freudenberg Home and Cleaning Solutions is a leading global supplier of branded cleaning systems as well as household and laundry care products whose advanced solutions make the lives of millions of consumers around the world easier. The portfolio includes brands like Vileda®, O'Cedar®, Oates, Gimi®, Gala®, Wettex® and Marigold®. With a leading market position in almost all of the countries in which it operates, the company generated sales of more than €975 million and employed more than 3,000 people in 2019. New, effective products and distribution channels, technical innovations and a strong customer focus have been the company's key success factors for many years. They are supported by extensive market and customer research on an international basis, innovation centres and production plants around the world and a distribution network in more than 35 countries.

ⁱ Representative online omnibus survey conducted by Ipsos GmbH with n=1,000 respondents 16-75 in Germany and n=1,000 respondents 16-70 in Italy; the interviews were conducted from March 19 to 20 in Germany and from March 20 to 23 in Italy.