

Cut Holiday Stress

HONESDALE (Wayne Co.) — Holidays are a good time for families to get together to strengthen family ties. But, if we aren't careful, the holiday stress and strains will overcome the goodwill of the season. Debra Bryant, Wayne County Cooperative Extension Director offers these thoughts on reducing your stress this holiday season.

Try not to overdo it. Being tired causes more stress. Staying up late finishing gifts, wrapping presents, or being out at a party means you'll be under extra stress. If you know you'll be up late, plan a short nap the next day to help you catch up. No time for a nap — relax in a chair. Put your feet up

for 20 - 30 minutes. Keep a family calendar and don't schedule several late nights in the same week. As a family, sit down and decide what things you will do and which things you won't. Choosing rather than doing everything means you'll all enjoy yourselves more.

Expect some problems. Anytime a group of people are cooped up together, there will be problems. We can all be on our best behavior for an hour or two, but when the same people spend a day or more together sparks fly. This can happen too, even with immediate family members. When a son or daughter goes away to college and returns home for the holidays, many families experience prob-

lems. The young person is used to being independent and may forget family rules or to check their plans with other family members. Family members should discuss this issue before the problems start to avoid stress on everyone.

Give yourself a break — Let the kids go bowling or out to a movie with friends, so the adults can have some time together or to rest. Plan an hour or so to do something that is relaxing or that you just would enjoy doing.

Be a welcome visitor — While visiting don't overstay your welcome. Call ahead to let your hosts know when you will be coming and when you will be leaving. If going to a party or for dinner, call

your hosts and offer to take something. Remember to help out as much as possible. Don't expect to be waited on. Try to be the kind of guest you would like to have in your home. Not only will there be less stress for the hosts, but everyone will be able to enjoy themselves.

Ask for help when you need it — It's no crime to admit you can't do it all. But don't expect someone to notice and offer you help. Give family members warning that you'll need their help and let them choose what they want to do

if possible. Working together on a project can be lots more fun than doing it yourself. Some unwilling helpers may even find themselves having a good time helping get the cards out or wrapping presents.

Hopefully, using some of these ideas will help you relax and enjoy your holiday season with family and friends. If you would like more information on reducing stress in your life, contact Wayne County Cooperative Extension, 925 Court St., Honesdale 18431, (717) 253-5970 ext. 239.

Prevent Carpet Stains From Christmas Tree

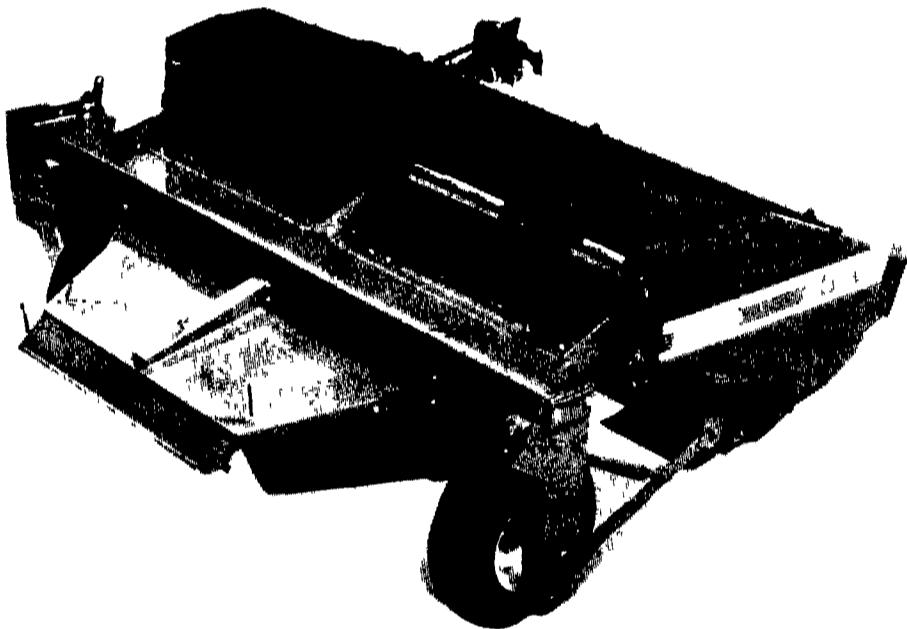
Water spilled from your Christmas tree holder and pitch from the tree can cause carpet stains. Here are some things you can do to prevent these stains (from Selection and Care of Your Christmas Tree, Cornell University).

- As you set up your tree, pick up needles that fall on the carpet. Green needles can cause stains if left on the carpet.
- If pitch does get on the carpet, apply a commercial spot remover.

Use only a small amount and then blot with a clean white cloth. Do not use carbon tetrachloride, Gasoline, or lighter fluid.

- As you add water to the reservoir, check for spill or sweating from the container. Blot spill immediately with paper towels. Place thick padding of towels over any wet area and weigh it down to allow moisture to be picked up into the toweling.

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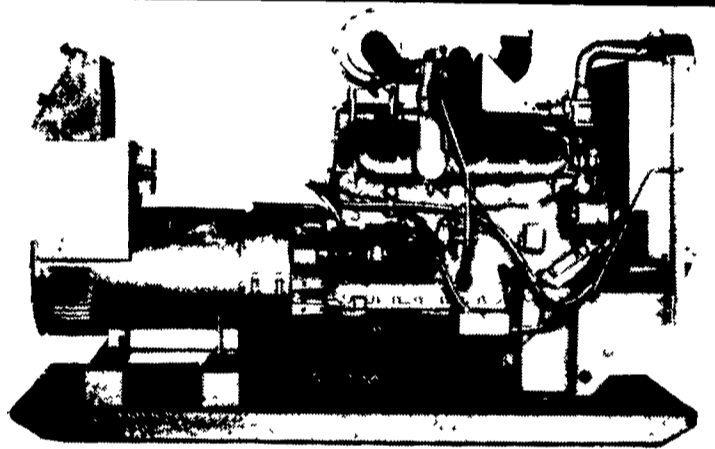
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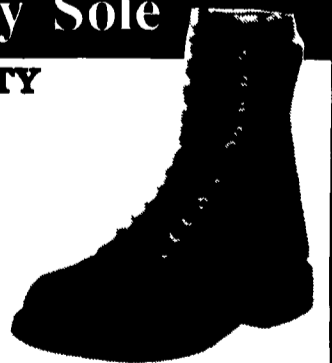
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