

Texas A&M AgriLife gives tips on doing laundry



**LIZ
BUCKNER**
Extension Agent

Laundry is not anyone's favorite task; however, laundry is more difficult when stains will not come out in the wash. So, what can be done? Well, Texas A&M AgriLife clothing and textiles specialist recommend to start by making sure damp or wet clothes are not placed in the laundry basket and left for several days.

With warm temperatures, high humidity, and any remaining food on clothing — especially kids' clothes — the setting creates perfect conditions for the growth of mil-

dew. Mildew is a fungus and appears as dark-colored spots and blotches on textile items. When the textile is left in a warm, humid location with little or no light or air circulation then perfect conditions have been created for very difficult mildew removal.

Prevention is the key. Experts at the International Fabricare Institute suggest drying any wet textiles before placing them in the laundry and certainly not storing them dirty. Some typical items might include infants' and children's clothing, sportswear, jackets, t-shirts, kitchen textiles, towels and other common items.

Avoid tossing damp clothing in a dark laundry hamper or closet. If the laundry cannot be done immediately, hang the item in an area with good air

circulation until the item is dry, or wash the item as soon as possible, treating the soiled area with a pre-wash enzyme product.

So what removes mildew? Actually, only chlorine bleach removes and kills mildew growth and stains. Since not all fabrics are safely treated with bleach, preventing the growth of mildew may be a better solution than trying to remove it later and possibly ruining the item.

The Texas A&M AgriLife Extension-Rusk County has two wonderful resources regarding laundry care: "Laundry On Your Own" and "Quick Stain Removal Guide."

Please contact the office at 113 E. Fordall St., Henderson, Texas, or call 903-657-0376, to request a copy.