

## **RESTORING WHITE FABRICS (96)**

**In manufacture off-white fabrics are bleached and impregnated with optical brightness to increase their whiteness. During wear and exposure to light, humidity and gases in the atmosphere white fabrics will oxidize, yellow and discolor. In order to restore the fabric to its original whiteness it is necessary to understand the use and effectiveness of bleaches. Bleaches restore brightness by adding oxygen to a fabric causing a chemical change in the make up of a discoloration. Professional drycleaners use the same bleaches in their restoration processes.**

### **RULES OF BLEACHING**

- .....Bleach white fabrics. Colored fabrics may not be safe even to so-called “color safe bleaches.”**
- .....Bleach in a plastic container or pail. Metal in a washing machine accelerates and breaks down bleach.**
- .....Use warm water when bleaching (100oF).**
- .....Put a towel over garment when soaking. This will prevent the garment from rising up out of the water.**
- .....Do not cover pail with a lid.**
- .....Dissolve bleach in the water before immersing garment.**
- .....Rinsing and neutralizing bleach is important.**

### **BLEACHES TO USE**

**(A) Sodium perborate and sodium percarbonate are found in such products such as Clorox II, Oxyclean, and similar products with a color safe bleach. It is always best to use products that are in powder form rather than liquid. These products release oxygen slowly and is the safest and most effective way of whitening most fabrics.**

### **PROCEDURE**

- (1) Dissolve 2 ounces of product per gallon of warm water.**
- (2) Soak the garment overnight.**
- (3) Re-wash.**
- (4) On the rinse cycle add white distilled vinegar to neutralize the bleach. Use 2 ounces of vinegar per gallon of water.**

**(B) Sodium hypochlorite-This is referred to as chlorine bleach. Most household products such as Clorox are effective. This bleach is very effective for whitening cotton, rayon and linen. This bleach can not be used on wool, silk, angora or nylon. This bleach will yellow and discolor these fabrics.**

## **PROCEDURE**

- (1) Soak in a pail of warm water and add ¼ ounce of bleach per gallon of warm water.**
- (2) Soak for no more than 15 minutes.**
- (3) After soaking re-wash the garment.**
- (4) Add vinegar to the rinse water in the ratio of 2 ounces per gallon of water.**
- (5) Re-wash garment again to remove vinegar odor.**

**WHEN IN DOUBT ON THE SAFETY OF USING BLEACH TEST FOR SAFETY ON UNEXPOSED AREA OF THE GARMENT.**

## **BLUING**

**Mrs. Stewarts Bluing is also effective in whitening fabrics. The bluing optically gives the fabric a whiter appearance. A slight tint camouflages a yellow or dingy appearance.**

## **PROCEDURE**

**Add bluing to the rinse cycle. You only have to add a little bluing to the water so the water is only slightly tinted.**