Hand-washing for the Holidays is for the Whole Family

By the Water Quality & Health Council

As we gather to celebrate the holidays, the “gifts” we least hope to share are the unseen pathogens that cause colds, flu and other illnesses. Holiday gatherings are prime venues for gift-exchange and, unfortunately, pathogen-exchange.

It’s not rocket science, and most adults know it, but frequent hand-washing can help reduce the “stealth” pathogen-swapping that goes on when folks congregate. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) notes that proper hand-washing is one of the most important steps we can take to avoid getting sick and spreading illnesses to others.

Do your children understand how important hand-washing is to staying healthy? You might start with this kid-friendly, 30 second video from CDC. Additionally, the American Cleaning Institute offers a fun “Clean Your Paws for Santa Claus Coloring Page”. The image caption clarifies that hand-washing “with soap and warm water for 20 seconds” precedes the reward of reaching for a cookie. Why not print out a few copies, grab a box of crayons, and share them with the children at your holiday gathering?

Here’s wishing you Happy, Healthy Holidays!

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