



Helpful tips will make spring cleaning breezy

Annaleigh Barker
Copy Editor

Spring means clear blue skies, chirping birds and cleaning.

After being pent up inside during winter, clutter and dust has accumulated. Now is the perfect time to open up a window and get cleaning a la Snow White. (Except, in actuality, the animals would only bring in more dirt, probably wouldn't be as friendly and could give you rabies.)

I'm here to offer advice on getting rid of unwanted items from your home, but instead of throwing them in the trash I've suggested some alternatives. In some instances, you could make a quick buck. If you're not big on spring cleaning, maybe tuck this article away for later in the summer when you need to ditch belongings before going to college or if you're moving.

want to make a little money and are too lazy to get rid of things at specific locations. If this is you, then the rest of the article won't be super helpful as it requires "effort." All you need is a nice afternoon, a local advertisement and some patience. Even if only five people buy things, you'll have more money than you did before and can just take your extra mix of items and donate them. Garage sales are a nice catch-all that provide a win-win situation

Books

There are a multitude of ways you can downsize your book collection, be it 50 books or only five. If you're looking to make a little money you can pop into a used book store or you can try one of the many places online where you can sell books. (I can't tell you credibly which one is the best as I've only ever used Amazon.) If you're looking to get rid of them immediately and you don't have time to market your wares, you can see if your local library accepts donations or head straight to a donation center. Try repurposing the book into a DIY project if all else fails. If

you've always wanted to hollow out a book and haven't, let this article be your sign.

Clothes

Unless you're a person who's always on top of cleaning their room and getting rid of things, you probably have an item or two in your closet that doesn't fit anymore or you haven't worn in a while. If this is true, you can try selling your clothes at places like Plato's Closet or online. You could organize a clothes swap with your friends or just donate your clothes. Flip the hangers of the clothes you do wear and over time you'll be able to get rid of those that go unflipped.

Toys and Stuffed Animals

These items can be hard to part with due to sentimental value, but some of them can be given a second life. I'm not saying to purge all of your stuffed animals, action figures or collections, but donating a few is totally doable. Think about it like Andy in *Toy Story 3*. It won't be easy, but there might be some kids out there who would love and play with the toys that have been sitting

at the back of your closet.

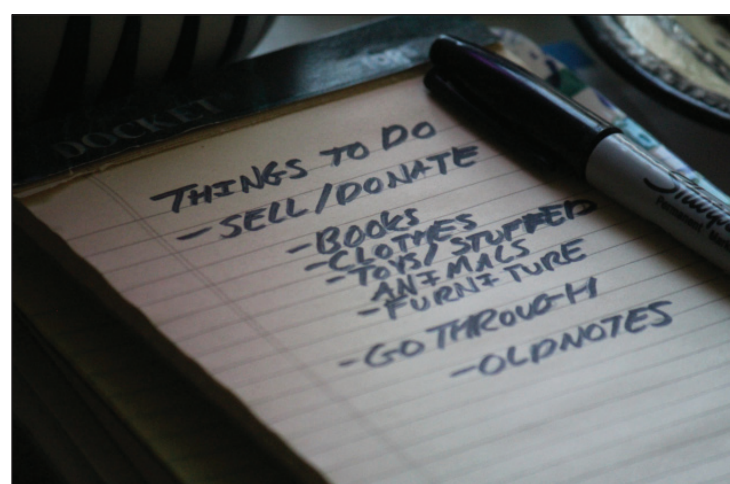
Furniture

I'm no expert when it comes to furniture, but your best bet would be with the garage sale. Getting rid of furniture can be no easy task if your piece is heavy and bulky. If it's something that you believe you can sell, by all means try your hand on places like Craigslist. If you want to get rid of a piece of furniture that's too big for your car, guess

what? Salvation Army will come and pick up your items. You can call or go through the very simple process on their website.

Old Schoolwork and Notes

On the last day of school you took all your binders out of your bag, tucked them into a corner and right now they are still there unmoved and gathering dust. It's long past time that you should have gone through your notes. Even though you think you'll need everything, just in case, what are the odds that you actually will? Carefully take the time to go back and keep what you think will be helpful in college like essays you can rewrite or AP notes that you've slaved away at. The rest you can recycle or get a group of friends together and have a bonfire.



Photos by Annaleigh Barker

Now is the perfect time to open up a window and get cleaning a la Snow

Proposed budget to slash Great Lakes EPA funding

Joe Chappelle

Staff Reporter

On March 17, President Trump released a budget blueprint.

The new plan proposes a \$54 billion dollar national defense spending increase, and as a result, the EPA's budget is expected to see a 24 percent decrease and a 20 percent decrease of its staff.

One of the main EPA programs that would see a major spending cut is the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI), which is currently a \$300 million initiative. Under the new plan, the GLRI would be cut completely.

The GLRI was launched in 2010 to accelerate efforts to protect and restore the Great Lakes. Among many other projects, the GLRI works to restore wetlands and other habitats, lead initiatives to improve/build new infrastructure through various Department of Defense U.S. Army Corps

of Engineers projects and National Park service projects and clean up toxic waste. A full list of programs and money allocation can be found on the GLRI website at www.glri.us.

Michigan is not the only state that benefits from the GLRI. Minnesota, Wisconsin, Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, Pennsylvania and New York all prosper from the various programs, grants and invasive species protection that GLRI provides.

However, two states in particular—Illinois and Michigan—care about one major GLRI program in particular: the protection of the Great Lakes from the invasive Asian Carp.

Introduction of Asian Carp in the Great Lakes would spell trouble for native species to the Lakes. These species would have to compete with the Asian Carp for food, which means less food for the native species.

As it stands in early to mid March,

Asian Carp have not reached Lake Michigan.

According to a Feb. 24 Chicago Tribune article, this is because the state of Illinois successfully stalls the Asian carp migration more than 60 miles below Lake Michigan near Dresden Island, in the Des Plaines River south of Joliet, and whatever Asian Carp do get through are stopped at the three Army Corps-engineered electric fish barriers located in the Chicago Area Waterway System at Romeoville.

According to a Feb. 28 Detroit News article, the The Corps of Engineers planned to propose the next

phase of stopping the Asian Carp, but the proposed plan was "deferred pending some more coordination that's needed," said Alan Marshall, a spokesman for the

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers district office in Rock Island, Illinois.

Early estimates for this project ranged between \$230 million and \$270 million for construction, plus \$8 million to \$10 million in annual operation and maintenance costs and it included a new engineered channel, another electric barrier, water jets, noise cannons and other preventative precautions, according to Detroit News.

The Corps of Engineers proposed that Illinois taxpayers shell out anywhere from \$75 million to \$90 million plus

annual operation and maintenance costs for the project. The project draws criticism from Illinois due to the potential it has to harm the commercial navigation industry, which generates roughly \$28 billion dollars from moving farm produce up and down the Illinois River.

While it is unclear why exactly the proposed plan was delayed, politicians from both states have their thoughts on the matter. One such politician is Michigan Democratic U.S Senator Debbie Stabenow.

"It's extremely alarming that it appears the Trump administration has decided to delay the release of today's plan which is a critical part of our efforts to stop Asian Carp and other invasive species from reaching our Great Lakes," Stabenow said in a public statement reported by the Detroit News.

While the Asian Carp prevention efforts are a main focus of the GLRI, Stabenow said "all of this relates to our ability to enjoy the Great Lakes; to be

able to continue to depend on the Great Lakes for drinking water; for all of the fun that we have in the lakes as well as all the jobs that are created."

The OHS Press reached out to the EPA in regards to the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative and was told: "[The] EPA is not commenting at this point in the budget process."

Per a Feb. 3 report on U.S News, Trump political appointees told the EPA to not issue press releases or post to official social media accounts without prior approval.

It is unclear as to what will happen with GLRI programs if Donald Trump's proposed budget passes. Many programs would see a large cut or elimination entirely. However, the proposed budget will not go down without a fight, with politicians from all states who benefit from GLRI programs vying for its keeping.

Michigan is not the only state that benefits from the GLRI. Minnesota, Wisconsin, Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, Pennsylvania and New York all prosper from the various programs

Fashion trends potentially detrimental to environment

Ben Hopper

Staff Reporter

Internet trends change all the time. Last week, people were obsessed with pointlessly flipping water bottles, and the week before that everyone and their sister was pretending to be a mannequin.

In the fashion world, it is not so different.

Clothing companies compete with one another at drastic speeds to stay in vogue. The problem with this is that not many people realize the actual harm being done by these "fast-fashion" brands.

According to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), 84 percent of unwanted clothes in the United

States in 2012 went into either a landfill or an incinerator.

Brands like H&M, Forever 21 and Zara manufacture masses of poor quality clothing that will soon after purchase be rendered useless; not only because of the quality, but because they are no longer in style.

People try and sell their unwanted garments to secondhand stores, but they stop wanting old-trend clothing almost quicker than regular people do.

For example, a local second-hand store, Plato's Closet East Lansing, said they only take in styles that were in their original stores in the last one and a half years.

The EPA has found that in the last 20 years, the volume of clothing Americans toss each year has doubled from 7 million to 14 million tons, or an astounding 80 pounds per person.

Clearly, the amount of waste these companies produce is increasing.

Some of these brands are coming to the realization that they need to cease their detrimental actions.

H&M launched a garment collecting initiative in 2013; even though the operation does not scratch at the surface of the damage done, at least H&M has taken a first step in the right direction toward sustainability.

These clothes harm the environment, too. Clothes made of materials like polyester can take ages to degrade and fabrics like cotton can leak harmful dyes into our waterways, according to Jason Kibbey, CEO of the Sustainable Apparel Coalition.

The consumer needs to come to the realization that it is constantly paying for cheap, eco-unfriendly clothes.

Benjamin VanSumeren (12), a fighter

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