## CLOTHING MANAGEMENT IN HOUSEKEEPING

### *Classification of Fibre*

Textile fibers are grouped into two main classes:

A. Natural fibers; are obtained from natural sources, either from plants or animals.

B. Synthetic or man-made fibres; which are produced form the chemical treatment of certain raw materials such as petroleum.

Laundry Operation

The laundering of clothes/fabrics involves washing them so that they look new again. Stain have to be removed and articles may be stiffened, if necessary. Finishing by ironing or pressing gives the articles a smooth appearance and helps them stay clean longer. Laundering is important for the following reasons:

1. Dirt is unhygienic and can be dangerous. Dirty clothes and household linen can harbor germs such as scabies and disease-carrying pests, lice, bedbugs, and fleas. These can be transferred to the skin when we wear dirty clothes. In fact our skin cannot be neater than the clothes we are wearing.

2. Dirty and stained articles are unpleasant to look at, and smell bad. A person wearing dirty clothes would be avoided by others.

3. Dirt can damage fabrics. It can form a chemical combination with the fabric. This can weaken the fabric if neglected. Laundering of clothes helps them to last longer.

Clothes are expensive to buy so they ought to be taken good care of through proper regular laundering.

Cleansing agents

Cleansing agents are substances which aid the removal of dirt. They include water, detergents, bleaches, etc.

Water : Water is a very important cleansing agent. Uses of water in laundry

1. Water is used for soaking clothes and household articles before washing. During

soaking or steeping, water penetrates the fibres of the fabrics and causes wetting.

2. Water alone can be used to cleanse articles with non-greasy dirt to a certain extent.

For instance, sugars on a table linen will dissolve in water but grease bound dirt will not.

3. Hot water will melt and soften grease. It, however, requires other cleaning agents,

such as soap, to emulsify and remove the grease.

4. Water is used for rinsing. Rinsing is important to remove all the soapy water and dirt

and to give the clothes a good colour.

5. Water is used for ironing. In order to remove creases or wrinkles from almost all fabrics or wrinkles from almost all fabrics, water must be present. The water is turned into steam as the iron moves across a dampened article, and fabric gradually becomes smooth as it dries out.

Suitable water for laundry

Hard water forms a scum with soap. The scum is seen as a sticky deposit on the surface of the

water and around the edges of the laundry basin on washing machine. As clothes are taken

out from the wash water, much of the scum sticks to them. Thus, hard water is not suitable

for laundry.

Synthetic detergents such as Omo and Elephant are, however, not affected by water hardness to the same extent as soap. Thus, they can be used with hard water without forming a scum but the cleansing power of the detergent may be affected. Therefore, more detergent is needed with hard water. Hard water needs to be softened before it is used for laundry. Soft water is the best water for laundry because soaps and synthetic detergents form good lather with no scum in it. Rain water is soft and, therefore, suitable for washing. With rain water, a little soap is needed for washing and the dirt comes out with very little rubbing.

Removal of Hardness in Water

Water can be softened for the laundry process by:

i. Boiling: Temporary hardness can be removed simply by boiling. Boiling converts

bicarbonate, causing hardness to carbonates. These carbonates are insoluble in water

and remain as a deposit in the boiler.

ii. Addition of soda: Washing soda can be added to hard water to soften it. It combines

with the calcium bicarbonate in the hard water and converts it to insoluble calcium carbonate.

iii. Use of calgon: This is a sodium salt of metaphosphoric acid which can be added to hard water to soften it. It can be added either with, or immediately before, the soap. It puts the lime salts causing hardness out of action before they can attack the soap to form scum.