Help an Elderly Mom or Dad Remove Clutter For a Safer Home

- Helping your elderly parents be safe will reduce the likelihood you will need to take off weeks from work to care for them if they fall and break a hip because of clutter.
- Clutter can be a safety hazard for the elderly. The elderly can stumble over excessive possessions. Materials and objects can even cause a fire or inhibit people from exiting the home rapidly in an emergency.
- Offer to help your folks organize their home so they have more room for the things that truly give them pleasure at this time in their lives.
- Be understanding, loving, and patient. One approach might be to tell your folks you would like to do this for them, since they've done so much for you.
- Take time, offer to un-clutter their home in steps giving them time to adjust after each cleaning day.
- Be sure to leave anything that gives your parents joy.
- Suggesting that opening up a cluttered space by removing disposable possessions or years of old newspapers etc., might help reduce stress and give your parents more control over their living space.
- Offer to help them create some organizing systems for closets and cabinets.
- Think about giving your parents gifts that do not add to clutter - gifts they may not need, but want to keep because they came from you. Ideas for gifts include dinner out gift certificates, theater tickets, gift certificate for a massage, etc.

Office of Environment, Safety and Health
POC: Claudia Beach, 301-903-9820 or
Claudia.Beach@eh.doe.gov