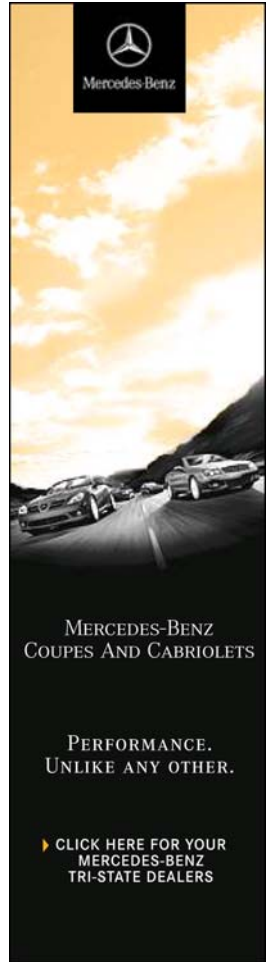


NEW YORK POST

SPRING CLEANIN'

By TRACY BYRNES



April 29, 2007 -- Spring cleaning is an annual ritual in homes across the country. Garages and closets everywhere get cleaned out, pared down and reorganized.

Well, while you're feeling the urge to purge, be sure to pull out your investment portfolio.

Granted, there isn't a whole lot of junk in the market's trunk these days, but there probably are some sectors in your portfolio that have taken off and need to be pulled to the curb, and others that may need to be added.

So get out your broom and start sweeping.

First, out with the excess.

You most likely need to pare back on some of your energy, utilities and materials holdings, notes Richard Coppa, president and founder of Wealth Health, a wealth-management firm in Roseland, N.J. Those allocations might be much higher than your original percentage, thanks to their recent runs. So sell some shares to get your allocation back in line.

Then, keep a few sectors on watch.

"Be leery of any business that could get caught in the crosshairs of the Democratic Congress and the White House," says Charles Payne, author of "Be Smart, Act Fast, Get Rich" and the founder of wstreet.com, a stock market research company. For instance, Congress is trying to crack down on drug pricing, so that could hurt the pharmaceutical companies down the road. So keep them on your radar.

Then stock up on the good stuff.

In these unsettling times, consumer staples are always a good place to be, notes Brad Sorensen, the head sector analyst at Schwab's Center for Investment Research. So companies like Proctor & Gamble will continue to do well because no matter what happens, people will always need toothpaste and toilet paper.

The rail and coal sectors also are doing well these days because they reflect the interconnectedness of the domestic and global economies, says Payne. So companies such as Joy Global, a mining-equipment company, and FreightCar America, a company that leases freight cars used to haul coal, should do well.

And many believe we're three to six months away from the official housing-market bottom. If that's true, the homebuilders should follow. That could also mean there'll soon be bargain opportunities in that sector, notes Coppa.

Ryland Group, a homebuilding company, and Toll Brothers, the ubiquitous residential home developer, are some of Payne's faves. "A year from now these stocks could be up 50 percent," he says.

And finally, don't discount the high-end retailers such as Four Seasons Hotels, Coach and Nordstrom because the wealthier consumer is still out there shopping.

So get your portfolio allocations back in line. Clean out the junk and stock up on the good stuff. Your closets - and your portfolio - will look much better when you're done.

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