



KEEP YOUR HOUSE GREEN, CLEAN, & HEALTHY!

A brief guide to the harmful effects of common household cleaners and their safer alternatives for you and your family

Did you know that:

- Indoor air is up to **five times** more polluted than outdoor air?
- The cleaning supplies we often use can make our air **hazardous to breathe?**
- **Fewer than 20%** of chemicals in household cleaners have been tested for health effects?
- Companies are **not legally required** to list their products' ingredients on the label?
- The terms "non-toxic", "safe", and "all-natural" have **no legal meaning!?**
- Some air fresheners contain **formaldehyde?**

Potential Health Effects of Common Household Cleaners:

- **Nausea** and **headaches**
- **Inflammation** and **burning** of the eyes, nose, throat, and respiratory system.
- Cause **allergies** and contain triggers for **asthma**.
- **Cancer** and **neurological, endocrine, liver, and kidney damage**.



The chemicals we're exposed to everyday build up in our bodies over time. Children's organs are still developing and can be more easily hurt by chemicals than adult organs.

Chemicals can be passed from mother to child:



Chemicals on an adult's skin or inside of adult mothers can be passed to children.



Toxins may cross the placenta and affect the development of unborn babies.



Toxins may pass to infants from mothers through breast-feeding.

Pictures from www.chemicalbodyburden.org

The good news is that there are **SAFE ALTERNATIVES** to harmful chemical cleaners!



What is green cleaning?

You already have products to make green cleaners in your home! Ingredients include baking soda, white vinegar, lemon, hydrogen peroxide, and vegetable-based soaps. Green cleaning is the safest way to make sure your family is not exposed to the chemicals in traditional household cleaners. It is also more affordable than traditional cleaners and better for our air, rivers, and soil.

See the back of this page for tips on how to begin your own safe cleaning practices!

Below are some great examples of inexpensive and non-toxic cleaning methods.

All Purpose Cleaner Recipes

Use for cleaning countertops, floors, walls, carpet, and upholstery.

Recipe #1: In a spray bottle, dissolve 4 tablespoons baking soda in one quart of warm water.

Recipe #2: In a spray bottle, add ½ cup vinegar to 1-2 cups warm water.

Recipe #3: In a spray bottle, combine ¼ cup distilled white vinegar, ½ teaspoon vegetable oil-based liquid soap (such as Dr. Bronner's brand), and ¾ cup warm water. Shake to blend.

Recipe #4: For really big jobs combine ½ cup distilled white vinegar, ½ cup oil-based liquid soap, and 2 gallons of warm water in a pail and stir to blend.

Tip: Add a few drops of essential oils to your green cleaners for an added toxic-free scent!

Recipe #5: For an abrasive cleaner, use baking soda or a non-chlorinated scouring powder, such as BonAmi.

Room/Air Freshener Recipes

After you locate the source of the odor problem and remove it, try opening a window and circulating air with a fan or air conditioner. If odors persist, try one of these ideas:

- Simmer cinnamon or cloves in water.
- Pour vanilla extract on a cotton ball and place in a small dish.
- Set out a dish of vinegar or simmer 1 tablespoon white vinegar in 1 cup of water for approximately 45 minutes to eliminate unpleasant cooking odors.
- Place a few drops of vanilla, almond, etc. extract or essential oils in a spray bottle full of water.

Glass Cleaner Recipe

Use as you would any glass cleaner.

In a spray bottle, combine 1 quart warm water with ¼ cup white vinegar OR 2 tablespoons lemon juice. Add a couple drops of essential oil for a pleasant scent.

Safety Tips:

- When shopping, read the labels carefully! You should avoid the following ingredients: *Chlorine, phosphates, phthalates, alkyl phenol ethoxylates, glycol ethers, fragrances & dyes, ammonia quaternary compounds, monoethanolamine and chlorine bleach.*
- Avoid products with labels like "danger/poison", and "warning". Review "caution" labels for severity of health hazards.
- Keep all cleaning products locked and out of children's reach, particularly products that look like juice.

Green Cleaning Resources

Josiah Hill III Clinic: For information regarding green cleaning workshops and healthy homes programs, contact 503-802-7389, or view our website: www.jhillclinic.org

Oregon Metro: 503-234-3000, www.oregonmetro.gov/index

Women's Voices for the Earth: 406-543-3747, www.womenandenvironment.org

