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Pennsylvania Resources Council, Inc.

"Working to protect the environment since 1939"

CHOOSE TO USE NON-TOXIC ALTERNATIVES

- for a safer, healthier home
- to protect your family
- to protect the environment
- to save \$\$\$

If the labels on your household cleaning products read "CAUTION, WARNING or DANGER," use one of the 5 basic alternatives: **baking soda**

borax, washing soda, lemon juice, or white vinegar.

Many commercial cleaners contain substances which are toxic and can burn skin or eyes on contact. Without proper ventilation their use can also produce harmful fumes. Nontoxic alternatives are not only as effective and easy to use as their commercial counterparts, but are also safer for your family and the environment.

4 EASY RECIPES FOR GENERAL CLEANING

All Purpose Cleaner

1 gallon hot water

1/2 cup washing soda

Mix well, wash surface, rinse.

Window & Glass Cleaner

1 gallon water

1/2 cup white vinegar

Apply with cloth or mist/spray bottle; dry with clean cloth.

Wood Furniture/Floor Polish

1/2 cup white vinegar

1/2 cup vegetable oil

Mix well; rub on surface; buff with clean, dry cloth.

Toilet Bowl Cleaner

1/2 cup borax

drop of mint extract

Scrub bowl with borax and a brush.

The need for household products containing hazardous substances is greatly reduced by taking preventive measures. To **prevent insect pests and vermin from taking up residence**, store food waste in sealed containers in the refrigerator or freezer until trash collection. Keep all surfaces free of food crumbs. If a pest problem does exist, there are alternatives to poisons and pesticides.

For ants Wash the area of the ant's trail to prevent others from following; sprinkle boric acid (obtained in hardware stores) along the line of entry.

For roaches Set out a dish containing equal parts sugar and baking soda (the sugar attracts and the baking soda eliminates).

For mice Use mouse traps or open your home to a cat.

For yellow jackets Utilize pheromone-baited traps (be sure to read labels).

To prevent flea infestations Feed pet tablet of brewers yeast and garlic. Bathe the dog regularly during flea season and use a flea comb on your cat or dog. Vacuum furniture and carpet thoroughly and frequently (store vacuum outside of home - in shed or garage, for instance - during problem periods); clean your pet's favorite sleeping spots regularly and sprinkle with fennel, rue or rosemary.

For Moths To prevent moths from feasting on your clothing and woolens, keep them clean and store in a cedar chest. Or place sachets made of cedar chips or lavender in your closets.

For Drain Clogs To prevent drain clogs, use strainer basket (kitchen) and hair traps (bathroom). Do not pour grease down drains.

For clogged drains Plug overflow drain with wet cloth; pour 1/4 cup baking soda into drain followed by 1/2 cup vinegar, close drain tightly until fizzing action stops; flush with boiling water. Remove cloth from overflow drain.

For Mildew To prevent mildew in your shower, wipe dry after use. Bleach mildew with hydrogen peroxide (a disinfectant found in many home medicine chests, and an environmentally safe alternative to chlorine-based products); then scrub with a thin paste of lemon juice and borax to inhibit mildew formation. Air fresheners disguise odors but do not eliminate the cause. Identify and remove the source

of odor. Ventilate.

MORE ABOUT WASHING SODA AND BORAX

What are they and where do I find them?

- Washing soda is sodium carbonate; baking soda is sodium bicarbonate; borax is sodium tetraborate decahydrate.
- Washing soda and baking soda make your wash water more alkaline, which releases dirt better. Borax is a natural deodorant and is abrasive, which helps to scrub out dirt.
- Washing soda and baking soda are benign. Borax can be an irritant to sensitive tissues such as the eyes and should not be ingested.
- Washing soda is made by Arm & Hammer and is usually found in the laundry soap section of large grocery stores. It is usually on the high or low shelves (non-high-consumer areas). Arm & Hammer's consumer affairs phone # is 800-524-1328.
- Borax under the brand name 20 Mule Team Borax is made by Dial. Their consumer affairs phone # is 800-528-0849.

MAKE YOUR HOME SAFE

THINK- "Do I need this product?"

REDUCE the number of products you purchase and the amounts you use.

CAREFULLY STORE in tightly sealed, leakproof containers out of reach of children and pets.

USE CAUTION- Follow directions on the label. "More" is not better. Allow proper room ventilation, when using product. **DISPOSE PROPERLY-** Share unused portions with a neighbor.

RESPONSIBILITY- Contact your township for recycling and disposal information.

The following items are flammable, toxic, and hazardous if used in improperly ventilated areas:

- OIL BASED PAINT, STAIN, VARNISH
- PAINT THINNER
- PAINT STRIPPERS

Use latex or water-based paints whenever possible; they are safer for you and the environment and are easier to use. To remove paint, use sandpaper.

When applying paint or pesticides in aerosol containers, stop and consider the substances you are inhaling during application. If you'd rather not inhale paint or toxic chemicals, choose another application method.

Batteries -- Disposable household batteries presently contain toxic heavy metals. Recommended

alternatives are solar-powered items (such as flashlights and calculators) or rechargeable batteries (recycle when they no longer hold a charge). Save disposable household batteries for the next Household Hazardous Waste Collection.

There are no safe nontoxic alternatives for the following items:

- ANTIFREEZE
- BRAKE/TRANSMISSION FLUID
- CAR BATTERIES
- CAR WAX/POLISH
- GASOLINE & KEROSENE MOTOR OIL

For these products, use them in their entirety, share unused portions with a neighbor, call dealers or manufacturers for "trade-in" programs, or contact your local solid waste authority for recycling or proper disposal.

Did You Know...Leftover latex paint can be stored for future touch-ups by pouring remainder into a glass jar with a plastic lid. For protection from accidental breakage, store in a plastic container

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