
CLEANING FOR HOME HEALTH

Why “Green” Cleaning?

“Green” cleaning (cleaning your home with less-toxic products and substances) is important because it better protects your health and your children’s health. Many common household cleaning products contain chemicals that can have adverse health effects. These chemicals can cause cancer, irritate the lungs, interfere with the functioning of the liver and other organs, irritate the skin, or affect the reproductive system. Studies indicate that most Americans have common household cleaning chemicals in their blood and urine.

Many common cleaning products can increase your risk of asthma, and they can cause people with asthma to have an attack. Asthma is the number one cause of school absenteeism.

Children are especially susceptible to the potential harm presented by cleaning chemicals. Pound for pound, children breathe more air, drink more water, and eat more food than adults. A child’s developing body is less capable of metabolizing and excreting these toxins—which increases the risks to their central nervous system, reproductive organs, immune system, and lungs.

Less-toxic products will help you keep your home clean.

They can even work better than more toxic products.

What Can You Do?

Be a label reader.

Begin by reading the labels of the products you use regularly. Manufacturers are not required to list ingredients on their products. However, if a product has clear labels that read “poison,” “warning,” or “caution,” you may not be using the safest product on the market.

Shop for products that disclose ingredients and look for products that are

- ✓ Plant- or bio-based, not petroleum-based
- ✓ Biodegradable
- ✓ pH neutral
- ✓ Packaged in pump-spray bottles, not aerosol cans
- ✓ Packaged in recyclable containers

Manufacturers of Commonly Available, Less-Toxic Cleaning Products‡

BioForce Enviro-Tech, Inc.*	www.bioforceinc.com/
Dr. Bronners	www.drbronner.com/
Earth Friendly	ecos.com/index.html
EarthSafe & Wellness Technologies *	www.earthwellness.com/
EarthWellTech *	www.earthwelltech.com/faq.html
Ecover	www.ecover.com
1stEnviroSafety *	www.1stenvirosafety.com/
Gemtek *	www.gemtek.com/
Lifetree	www.herbalhut.com/mfrs/life_tree_products.htm
Naturally Yours	www.naturallyyoursstore.com
New Use *	www.newuseproducts.com/
Planet	www.planetinc.com/
Restore *	www.restoreproducts.com/
Seventh Generation	www.seventhgeneration.com/

* mail order only

‡ INFORM does not endorse specific products or companies

INFORM is a national, non-profit research and outreach organization that examines the effects of business practices, technologies, and products on the environment and human health. For 30 years, INFORM has sought practical solutions to the environmental challenges of safeguarding ecosystems from toxic chemicals, shifting to pollution-free transportation, and preventing solid waste. Combining groundbreaking research with strategic outreach, INFORM endeavors to turn findings into change. INFORM's objective and constructive recommendations have helped guide members of government, industry, environmental groups, and communities around the world in decisions promoting both economic and ecological sustainability.

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For more information, contact:

Cameron S. Lory, 212-361-2400, x232, lory@informinc.org
Carol Westinghouse, 802-626-8643, westies@ecoisp.com