

Household Household Hazardous Alternatives Fact Sheet

Many products used in the average household contain materials that are considered hazardous because the ingredients are flammable, corrosive, toxic or reactive. Many of these products are so familiar, that their hazards may be overlooked or underestimated. But for those who wish to play it safe, there are alternatives:

In the Kitchen

Window Cleaner

Measure 3 tablespoons ammonia, 1 tablespoon white vinegar, and 3/4 cup water into clean spray bottle. Spray on window and wipe clean with a newspaper.

Metal Polish

Brass: Polish with Worcestershire sauce.

Copper: Soak in vinegar and salt solution.

Silver: Soak in a quart of warm water containing 1 teaspoon baking soda, 1 teaspoon salt and a piece of aluminum foil.

Oven Cleaner

1. Scrub with a paste of baking soda, salt and water.
2. Leave 1/4 cup ammonia in the oven overnight and wipe away grease the next morning. Ventilate the kitchen and avoid breathing fumes.

Floor Wax and Strippers

Polishing: Mix 1 part thick boiled starch with 1 part soap suds; rub the mixture on the floor and polish with a dry cloth.

Removing: Pour a little club soda on the area, scrub well, let soak for 5 minutes and wipe.

In the Bathroom

Abrasive Cleaners

Toilet: Pour 1/2 cup chlorine bleach into toilet bowl, let stand for 30 minutes, scrub with a long handled brush and flush.

Drain: Flush with boiling water, 1/4 cup baking soda and 2 ounces of vinegar.

Sinks: use brands without chlorine or scrub with baking soda.

Air Fresheners/Deodorizers

1. Sprinkle baking soda in odor-producing area.
2. Set vinegar out in open dish.
3. Sprinkle borax in corners of room.
4. Place an open box of baking soda in refrigerator to absorb food odors.
5. Pour baking soda or lemon juice down garbage disposal for garbage disposal odors.
6. Sprinkle baking soda over entire carpet and vacuum after 30 minutes.

Disinfectants

1. Use 1/2 cup borax dissolved in 1 gallon of hot water.
2. Use sodium carbonate (washing soda) in clothes washer.
3. Use hydrogen peroxide or detergent cleaners

Around the House

Rug/Upholstery Cleaner

1. Mix 1/2 cup mild dishwashing detergent with 1 pint boiling water. Let cool. Whip into paste with mixer. Apply with a damp sponge. Wipe suds. Rinse with 1 cup vinegar to 1 gallon lukewarm water. Allow to dry.
2. Shampoo with 6 tablespoons of soap flakes, 2 tablespoon borax and 1 pint boiling water let cool before applying.

Spot Removers

1. Set stains: dab with white vinegar.
2. Non-set stains: Sponge up or scrape up as much as possible immediately. Rub with club soda followed by cold water.
3. Butter, gravy or chocolate stains: Dab with a cloth dampened with a solution of 1 teaspoon white vinegar and 1 quart cold water.

Garden/Pesticides

Ants

1. Pour boiling water over the nest.
2. Remove accessible food and water.
3. Pour a line of cream of tartar or chili powder where ants enter house and they will not cross it.

Fleas and Ticks

1. Feed pets brewers yeast.
2. Vacuum pet's bedding regularly.
3. Place eucalyptus seeds, leaves and cedar chips near bedding

Rats/Mice

1. Use live traps
2. Remove the food supply.

Weeds

1. Pull weeds and keep grass short.
2. Select plants that can compete with weeds.

Garage/Workshop

Oil-Based Paints

1. Use latex (water-based) Paints
2. Use limestone-based whitewash
3. Seal all paint cans with tight fitting lids.

Paint Strippers

In a well ventilated area, use sandpaper, scraper and heat gun or water based strippers.

This fact sheet is provided by The Professional Recyclers of Pennsylvania at PO Box 25, Bellwood, PA 16617 e-mail prop@epix.net. Portions of this fact sheet were adapted from a fact sheet published by the Penn State Cooperative Extension.