## Tips to reduce cleaning-related waste

### Buy Wisely

- Don't overstock on cleaning supplies! Buy only what you need and avoid unwanted leftovers and unnecessary disposal problems.
- Before you buy, read the label carefully for ingredient information and handling and disposal instructions.
- Purchase the least toxic item to do the job.

### Handle and Dispose Safely

- Clearly mark dangerous cleaning supplies. Keep them in their original container to prevent accidental poisoning. Remember that children do not know that a product is dangerous until someone teaches them.
- The best way to dispose of a hazardous product is to use all of it. If you can't use it, give it to some one who can.
- Never pour large amounts of leftover cleaning supplies down the drain. They will enter the water system and pollute drinking water, lakes and rivers.
- If there is a HHW collection event in your area, take leftovers there.
- Recycle empty aerosol cans and containers.
- If you need to dispose of hazardous products, **call the Household Hazardous Waste Hotline at 1-800-346-4242** to see if there is a collection program in your area and for additional information on household hazardous waste.

Pennsylvania Household Hazardous Waste Program

Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection

Tom Ridge, Governor James M. Seif, Secretary

This and related environmental information is available electronically via Internet. Access DEP through the Pennsylvania homepage at www.state.pa.us or directly at www.dep.state.pa.us (direct link Household Hazardous Waste).

For additional household hazardous waste information, please call the Household Hazardous Waste Hotline: 1-800-346-4242.

GreenWorks Channel.org

www.GreenWorksChannel.org

A web space dedicated to helping you learn how to protect and improve the environment. The site features the largest collection of environmental videos available on the Internet and is produced by the nonprofit Environmental Fund for Pennsylvania, with financial support from the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, 800 334-3190.

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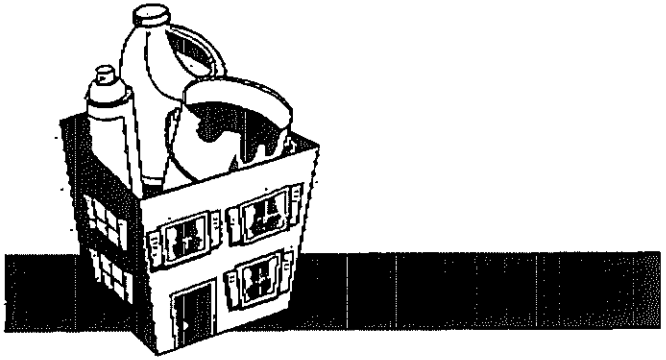
# "Green" Cleaning Tips:

# Shining Prospects for the Environment



## Environmentally Friendly Cleaning

Cleaning products are not all alike. They differ not only in smell or packaging, but also in their effects on the environment. Many everyday cleaning supplies contain hazardous substances which — when disposed improperly — are dangerous to the environment.

Read labels to find out if products are hazardous. Generally, household hazardous waste (HHW) belongs to one of the following hazardous waste categories:

**Toxic**
Poisonous. Labels may have the skull and crossbones and usually state, "Danger/Poison" or "Warning–Keep out of the reach of children."

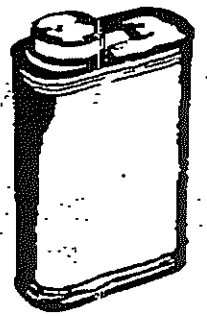
**Corrosive**
Labels usually state, "Corrosive–avoid contact with skin and eyes."

**Flammable**
Labels usually read, "Extremely Flammable–keep away from any source of ignition" or "Highly flammable–keep away from flames."

**Reactive**
"Warning–strong oxidizer" usually appears on the label.

When you dispose of these products, they become household hazardous waste (HHW). If you cannot use all of the product, give it to somebody who can. If disposal is necessary, take it to an HHW collection site.

Homemade cleaning products are often a safe alternative to hazardous blends. Whether you need to shine your silver or deodorize your rug, you can mix up your own environmentally friendly cleaning supplies. Common ingredients such as baking soda, borax, lemon juice, white vinegar and ketchup, keep these recipes simple while helping to save our environment.



## Homemade and efficient...

**All purpose Cleaner**
Baking soda is the perfect all-purpose cleaner. It deodorizes everything from plastic food containers and cutting boards to trash cans and refrigerators. Baking soda is also ideal for cleaning countertops and tile. Pour it on a cloth, scour and rinse. Try it in your bathroom, too!

**Wooden Floor and Furniture Polish**
Mix 1/2 cup of white vinegar or lemon juice with 1 cup of olive or vegetable oil to turn your living room floor into a dance floor and to make your furniture shine. Stir well and rub the mixture onto the surface. Buff with a clean, dry cloth afterwards.

**Rug Deodorizer**
Do you need help getting odors out of your carpet? Mix two parts of cornmeal with one part of borax, and sprinkle evenly over your rug. Let it set for one hour, then vacuum.

**Dishwasher Detergent**
Not ready to run the dishwasher, but can't stand the smell of yesterday's lunch? Sprinkle a handful of baking soda onto the dishes to absorb the odor, then you can wait until the dishwasher is full.

Decrease the amount of detergent you use. Put baking soda in the dispenser without a lid to get dishes equally as clean.

**Window Cleaner**
Mix 1/4 cup white vinegar and 1 quart of water. Spray on and wipe with a clean cloth.

*Warning – never mix chlorine bleach with ammonia or vinegar.*

## ...alternative cleaning recipes

### Pots and Silverware

Make your pots and silverware shine in no time:

**Aluminum Pots**
Rub pots with lemon juice. Rinse or soak them overnight in vinegar and water.

**Stainless Steel**
Clean your stainless steel with a paste of baking soda and water.

**Copper Pots**
Use ketchup or lemon juice and salt to polish copper pots.

**Chrome**
Plain vinegar will bring a shine to your chrome.

**Brass**
Use either ketchup or a mixture of salt, flour and vinegar to make your brass shine.

**Silver**
Line an aluminum pan with aluminum foil and fill it with one and a half quarts of hot water, 1/2 tablespoon of baking soda, and 1/2 tablespoon of salt. Soak silver, then polish with a clean cloth.

**Drain Cleaner**
To free minor clogs and help prevent future ones, pour 1/2 cup of baking soda down the drain, and follow with 1/2 cup vinegar. Let it fizz for a few minutes, then pour a teakettle of boiling water into the drain. Repeat if needed. Use a plunger or plumber's snake for stubborn clogs.