

News Article for Week of: February 25, 2010

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Green Cleaning

Want to go green and save money as you clean? Today, more and more people are seeking more natural cleaning methods to reduce their exposure to harsh chemicals. You can reduce handling, use, and disposal hazards associated with dangerous household products by substituting safer alternatives. Some of these alternatives are as simple as immediately mopping up spills with water and club soda. In some cases, using these alternatives may require more effort in order to get the desired results. Many use products that you will find in your kitchen cupboards, such as white vinegar, lemon juice, baking soda and salt used in various combinations. These products can do an effective job of cleaning and also improve the environment and reduce water. In some cases, using these alternatives may require more effort in order to get desired results. Discover the green way of cleaning for your home!

To help you get started, the following suggestions give some alternatives for common household cleaning products. These alternatives are relatively free of toxic effects.

Air Fresheners:

1. Use the air conditioner to dry the air and keep odors down.
2. Place an open box of baking soda in the refrigerator to absorb food odors.

Aluminum Cleaners:

1. Scour badly abraded aluminum containers with whiting (calcium carbonate, found in paint stores) and soap jelly (recipe given in General Purpose Cleaners section). Use very fine steel wool.

Bathroom Cleaners/Disinfectants:

1. Mildew and other stains can be removed from grout with a solution of ½ cup of bleach and 1 cup water. Let stand 5 minutes and rinse with clear water.
2. Scrub with washing soda (sodium carbonate) or borax (sodium borate).

Copper Cleaner:

1. Tarnished copper can be cleaned with salt dissolved in hot white cider vinegar or lemon juice.

Drain Cleaners:

1. Mix 1 cup of baking soda, salt and white vinegar. Wait 15 minutes. Pour in drain and flush thoroughly with boiling water. Use a rubber plumber's snake if drain is seriously clogged.

Furniture Polish:

1. Mix 1 tablespoon mild soap powder, 1 quart water, 1 tablespoon household ammonia, and 2 tablespoons boiled linseed oil or a good furniture polish.

General Purpose Cleaners:

1. 2 tablespoons of ammonia, 2 tablespoons liquid detergent, 1 quart warm water.
2. Soap jelly (used in other formulas). To make, dissolve 1 cup of shaved soap or soap flakes in 1 quart boiling water. When entirely melted or dissolved, pour into a wide mouth jar. Let stand in a cool place until it jells.

Toilet Bowl Cleaner:

1. Pour ½ cup liquid chlorine bleach into toilet bowl. Let stand for at least 30 minutes, then scrub with a long-handled brush and flush. **Remember, NEVER mix ammonia and bleach.**

Upholstery Cleaner:

1. Mix ½ cup mild liquid dishwashing detergent with 1 pint boiling water. Let cool. Whip into a thick foam using an electric mixer. Pretest a small area before proceeding. Apply the foam to the

fabric with a damp sponge. Wipe off the suds with a clean cloth. To rinse, add 1 cup of white vinegar to 1 gallon of lukewarm water. Rinse well, using as little liquid as possible, and change the water often. Put pressure on a clean white towel to remove the moisture (do not rub).

Window & Mirror Cleaners:

1. Remove surface soil with paper towel or soft cloth. Apply cleaning liquid with a sponge. Rub dry and polish with a newspaper or cloth.
2. On windows, rub the inside in one direction and the outside in another to determine which side the streaks are on. Avoid spilling the cleaner on painted or varnished wood work because it can damage the finish.
3. Add 1 tablespoon of vinegar to 1 quart water. Apply with a wadded-up newspaper.
4. Mix 3 tablespoons of ammonia, 1 tablespoon white vinegar, and $\frac{3}{4}$ cup water in a clean spray bottle.
5. Mix $\frac{1}{4}$ cup cornstarch, $\frac{1}{2}$ cup ammonia, and 1 cup vinegar in a jar. Wear gloves, if necessary, because vinegar is a mild acid. It will remove rust or lime deposits on the outside of the windows.

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