MAKING CLEAN GREEN
Safer strategies for cleaning

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The use of synthetic chemicals in everyday products has skyrocketed over the last 70 years.

Most chemicals were assumed safe, without testing.

Over 2,000 have been linked to health problems, but only 200 have been fully tested.

Seemingly innocuous products — including cleaning products — contain these chemicals.

Since products aren’t labeled, you don’t know when you’re buying or using something toxic.
CHEMICALS AFFECT OUR HEALTH

- Monoethanolamine (MEA)
- Glycol Ethers
- Alkyl phenol ethoxylates (APEs)
- Phthalates

- A surfactant that can induce occupational asthma
- Solvents linked to reduced fertility and low birth weight
- Surfactants that can reduce embryo survival in fish and alter tadpole development
- Fragrance carriers that can feminize boys, reduce sperm count and increase allergic symptoms and asthma
DISINFECTANTS: FRIEND OR FOE?

- Chlorine bleach
- Ammonia
- Triclosan/Triclocarban
- Ammonium quaternary compounds ("quats")
- Nano-silver

DO WE NEED THEM?

- Eye, skin and respiratory irritant
- Can harm eyes, skin, lungs and throat
- Hormone Disruptors
- Fertility impacts
- Toxic to liver and brain
FRAGRANCE

- All-purpose cleaners
- Laundry detergent
- Dish-washing detergent
- Toilet bowl cleaners
- Glass Cleaners
- Air fresheners
- Furniture polish
- Floor cleaners
- Oven cleaner
- Hand soap
- And so much more!

- Could mean one chemical, or 100
- Closely guarded information
- May contain carcinogens
- Phthalates used as a carrier
SAFER SOLUTIONS

- What’s in the product?
- Safer strategies
- Make your own
- Engage companies
- Chemical Policy Reform
WHAT’S IN THAT PRODUCT?

- Choose products thoughtfully. Read labels, and only choose products that disclose all ingredients
  - Some eco-labels can be helpful: [www.greenerchoices.org/eco-labels/](http://www.greenerchoices.org/eco-labels/)
  - Beware of vague claims like “natural,” “non-toxic” and “green”

- What’s not on the label
  - Recent study found cancer-causing 1-4 dioxane in cleaning products —
    - Tide Free and Gentle
    - Tide Original Scent
    - Bounce Free and Sensitive
SAFER STRATEGIES

- Focus disinfection only on key spots (toilet handles, light switches...)
- Separate raw meat from other foods
- Refrigerate foods (especially raw meat) promptly
- Wash hands frequently
- Avoid products in aerosol cans
- Choose essential oils over air fresheners
MAKE YOUR OWN

- Key ingredients:
  - Vinegar
  - Baking Soda
  - Soap and water
  - Lemon juice and oil
  - Essential oils
  - Castile Soap
  - Cloths (microfiber)

- Vinegar is very acidic, and can be:
  - Mixed with water in a spray bottle to clean surfaces and windows
  - Used with baking soda as a drain cleaner
  - Used to clean toilets

- Lemon juice and oil — salad dressing or furniture polish/hardwood floor polish
Choose

- Dish detergents without fragrance
- Vinegar water for cleaning surfaces (kills bacteria) including floors
- Baking soda and water to clean baked-on or stuck-on messes (including in your oven!)
- Microfiber cloths can dust

Avoid

- Conventional oven cleaners
- Triclosan
- Aerosols
- Harsh disinfectants
Choose

- Baking soda mixed with a little water cleans off soap scum
- Vinegar and water kill bacteria, leave mirrors spotless
- Vinegar and baking soda can clean the toilet
- Cloth/nylon shower curtains can go into the washer
- Simple soap works for hands!

Avoid

- Triclosan
- Automatic shower cleaners
- Aerosols
- Fragrance
LAUNDRY

- **Choose**
  - Dryer balls over dryer sheets to remove static
  - Detergents that disclose all ingredients, only have a few naturally-derived ingredients
  - Baking soda and borax as laundry boosters
  - Chlorine-free bleach

- **Avoid**
  - Chlorine bleach
  - Detergents with heavy scents
  - Detergents that have been found to have 1,4-dioxane as a contaminant (Tide Free and Gentle, for example)
THE REST OF THE HOUSE

- Microfiber cloths can be used dry to dust, wet to remove finger prints, dirt from walls
- Vinegar or lemon juice and oil make a great furniture polish
- Use a vacuum cleaner with a HEPA filter to trap small particles
- Vinegar and water are great for glass
- Microfiber cloths, dampened, are great for everyday floor cleaning
CALL YOUR FAVORITE COMPANY

- Do you have a favorite product, but are concerned about what it’s made of? Call the customer care number on the back of the package, and voice your concerns!
WE NEED NEW LAWS

New laws must:

- Take immediate action on the most dangerous chemicals
- Hold industry responsible for the safety of their chemicals and products
- Use the best science to protect all people and vulnerable groups
Environmental health advocacy organization

Promoting safer chemicals, a sustainable economy and a healthier world

+ We envision a world where use of toxic chemicals is unthinkable and safe, sustainable solutions are everywhere
+ We must transform public policy and the marketplace
+ Collaboration is the key
HOW WE WIN: COLLABORATION

The Just Green Partnership
Working for Environmental Health and Justice for New York's People and Communities

Safer States

Safer Chemicals Healthy Families
CONCLUSION

- We can each take steps to make safer product choices
- We can call on companies to make products safer
- We can work together to get stronger laws at the state and federal levels.
- We can all make a difference in this vital transformation!
RESOURCES

- Women’s Voices for the Earth: www.womensvoices.org
  - They have tested products and have many great reports and factsheets

- Clean and Healthy New York: www.cleanshealthyny.org
  - Check out our green cleaning house party kit!

- JustGreen Partnership: www.just-green.org

- Safer Chemicals, Healthy Families: www.saferchemicals.org
THANK YOU!

Together, we win!

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