

# Kansas Green Teams

## Friday Facts



### Cleaning who needs it!

Everyone likes a clean home or office, but few of us like the chore of cleaning. Even worse, we often rely on a variety of hazardous chemical products to make our bathrooms sparkle, floors shine or the laundry to smell like spring rain. Dishwashing soap contain phosphates that pollute the groundwater; wood polish generally contains flammable or toxic substances; and laundry soap may contain bleach and other corrosives.

Even though they help us pick up dirt and dust, many modern cleaners irritate our skin, eyes, and lungs. They can also leave toxic residues or pollute the water when we rinse them down the drain. But keeping our space clean does not require the use of hazardous chemicals. Several companies now produce “green” cleaners that are biodegradable and contain no toxic ingredients.

### Something to think about:

- ◇ Household cleaning products were responsible for nearly 10 percent of all toxic exposures reported to U.S. Poison Control Centers in 2000, accounting for 206,636 calls.
- ◇ According to the U.S. EPA, the air inside the typical home is up to 5 times more polluted than air just outside—largely because of household cleaners and pesticides.
- ◇ The Janitorial Products Pollution Prevention Project reports that 6 out of every 100 janitors in Washington State have lost time from their jobs as a result of injuries linked to toxic or corrosive cleaning products.
- ◇ In a 2002 U.S. Geological Survey study of contaminants in U.S. stream water, 69 percent of streams sampled contained persistent detergents, and 66 percent contained disinfectants.

### Things you could do:

- ◇ Stock up on safe, simple ingredients that can be used in most cleaning situations. Soap, water, baking soda, vinegar, lemon juice, borax and a coarse scrubbing sponge can take care of most household cleaning needs.
- ◇ For glass cleaner, use a mixture of half white vinegar and half water.
- ◇ Baking soda and cornstarch are both good carpet deodorizers.
- ◇ To clean up mildew and mold, use a mixture of lemon juice or white vinegar and salt.
- ◇ A paste of baking soda, salt, and hot water makes a great oven cleaner.

In a rare instance that you need to use a hazardous product, use as little as possible and dispose of it in a way that will cause minimal harm—for example, take it to your household hazardous waste facility.

Source: [Worldwatch](#)



**Get Caught !**

“the most easily managed waste is material that never becomes waste”

