



Resourceful News

Resource conservation and pollution prevention tips for home and work.



Spring-cleaning with a Conscience

Spring-cleaning can be hazardous to your health – and to the environment. Many common household cleaners contain alcohol, ammonia, bleach, formaldehyde and lye; substances that can cause nausea, vomiting, inflammation and burning of the eyes and throat. Some of these ingredients have been linked with neurological, liver and kidney damage, asthma and cancer.

Create Your Own Greener Cleaners

Some of the greenest cleaners are the ones you make yourself. Here are some recipes for simple, effective cleaners.

- ❖ **Drain Cleaner:** Pour a half-cup of baking soda down the sink and add at least a cup of vinegar. Cover the drain and wait a few minutes, then rinse with a mixture of boiling water and salt.
- ❖ **Window Cleaner:** Add 2 ounces of vinegar to a quart of water in a spray bottle.
- ❖ **Streakless Glass Cleaner:** Blend 2 ounces of vinegar, a spoonful of cornstarch and a quart of warm water. Apply with a sponge and wipe dry.
- ❖ **Silver Polish:** Put a sheet of aluminum foil into a plastic or glass bowl. Sprinkle the foil with salt and baking soda and fill the bowl with warm water. Soak your silver in the bowl and tarnish migrates to the foil. Dry and buff.
- ❖ **Brass Cleaner:** Cut a lemon in half, sprinkle it with salt and rub the lemon on the metal. Buff with a cloth.
- ❖ **Rust Remover:** Use vinegar to remove rust on nuts and bolts and other mineral deposits such as calcium deposits.

Tips for Greener Spring Cleaning

When buying and using cleaning products, here are some things to keep in mind:

- ❖ Read labels carefully and make an informed environmental decision when purchasing cleaning products. Always buy safer alternatives whenever possible.
- ❖ If you are concerned about the safety or environmental impacts of certain products, contact the manufacturer for more information.
- ❖ Use cleaning products in well-ventilated areas to avoid breathing the fumes.
- ❖ When cleaning, remember to use no more than the recommended amount.
- ❖ Use a scourer or rub harder on problem areas, rather than overusing cleaners.
- ❖ Do not mix products unless instructed to do so by label directions. This can cause unwanted chemical reactions that can harm you.